

RECOLLECTIONS AND EXPERIENCES

DURING A PARLIAMENTARY CAREER

FROM 1833 TO 1848.

BY

JOHN O'CONNELL, ESQ. M.P

DA 950.23

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"Quæque ipse vidi

"Et quorum pars fui."

Ving.

1849a

"Exul . . .

"Projicit ampullas et sesquipedalia verba."

Hor.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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TO THE
REV. JOHN MILEY, D.D.
OF DUBLIN

THESE SKETCHES ARE RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY HIS
ADMIRING AND DEVOTED FRIEND

JOHN O'CONNELL.

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PARLIAMENTARY
AND
AGITATION EXPERIENCES.

CHAPTER I.

OPENING OF THE FIRST REFORM PARLIAMENT.—WILLIAM COBBETT.—
THOMAS ATTWOOD.—ELECTION OF A SPEAKER.—MANNERS SUTTON.
—THE KING'S SPEECH.—IRISH REPEAL.—LORD STANLEY.—COERCION
BILL.—DANIEL O'CONNELL.—SIR ROBERT PEEL.

EARLY in the forenoon of Tuesday, the 5th of February, 1833, my father led what might have been called his *household brigade*—viz. his three sons, and two sons-in-law, down to the House of Commons, to be present at the opening of the first Reform Parliament, of which all six had just been elected members.

In the passages we met, and were introduced to, Cobbett, who, like some of ourselves, was then for the first time in Parliament, having been just returned for the newly-enfranchised borough of Oldham. Some—at least I may speak for *one*—of our party felt no little interest at seeing and speaking to that singular man, whom, hitherto, we had only known by his powerful, but coarse and unscrupulous writings. He was habited, as I recollect, in a kind of pepper-and-salt-coloured garb, in fashion something between that of a Quaker and of a comfortable farmer; and wore rather a broad-brimmed white hat, a little on one side, and thrown back, so as to give the fullest view of his shrewd though bluff countenance, and his keen, cold-looking eye.

We also fell in with Thomas Attwood, of Birmingham, the Lafayette of the Birmingham movement party; quite as respectable and as politically imbecile as his French prototype. With him and two or three more of the English Reformers, who had been recently conspicuous in agitation, we had an interchange of congratulations on the *actual assemblage* of a Reformed Parliament, and of some large anticipations as

to further victories—congratulations and anticipations speedily to be put an end to by disgust and disappointment.

As the hour drew near when the business of electing a Speaker was to be proceeded with, we went into the House of Commons, which was then, as formerly, the old Chapel of St. Stephen's; the destructive fire that has given such scope to Mr. Barry's great, although somewhat elaborate and decidedly expensive architectural genius, not having occurred for a year and a half later.

No man, whether young or old, ever entered the House of Commons for the first time without some degree of emotion. The same may doubtless be said of the novice in other public assemblies, but the emotion is peculiar on entering the House of Commons of England; or, at any rate, such *was* the case, while it met in the scene of its ancient labours and struggles.

To call it the oldest deliberative assembly in the world is a mere phrase at best; and particularly so considering the *nonage* of the representative bodies existing in other countries. But turning from phrases to facts, it *is* (at least I so felt it) an exciting thing to enter an assembly replete with

such historic recollections, and where the democratic principle has maintained so hard and stout a fight during centuries.

As usual, at the assembling of a new Parliament, before what the Americans style the "calling to order of the meeting," the floor of the House was covered with members, either exchanging greetings, intelligence, &c. with old parliamentary acquaintances, or wandering from group to group in quest of such, and in curious examination of the *Reform* recruits.

I could discern that our "household brigade," were the objects of rather particular scrutiny and criticism, and in especial were favoured with rather a long quizzing from Lord Stanley's eyeglass,—an ordeal to which a hot spirit of our party manifested a good deal of disrelish, that he could hardly be restrained from making an active demonstration on the spot. In our turn, such of us as were new to Parliament were not idle, but took ample revenge in commenting upon the strange herd amongst which we found ourselves, and on the discrepancies between our preconceived notions of the more remarkable persons and the reality.

At length the hubbub began to cease, and the chaos resolved itself into some order. Mr. Ley took his seat at the table of the House in his usual place as first Clerk, but acting for the nonce as Chairman. A very pardonable feeling in my father induced him to range his three sons in a line on the bench where he sat himself, the second bench on the opposition side. Before us, ranged upon the front bench of the same side, were Attwood, Duncombe, Fielden, and, most conspicuous of all, William Cobbett. Around and below us were others of the Radical Reform party. In front, filling all the seats on the 'Treasury side, the benches at and below the bar; and even outflanking us, spread the motley and multitudinous gathering of the more Whiggish Reformers and ministerial followers, while in a narrow segment of the benches, at the upper end of the House (on our side), frowned the small but compact and well-ordered array of the so recently discomfited Tories.

“ Few and faint—but fearless still !”

While occupied in scanning all these dispositions, and noting the aspects of the various

leaders, our attention was suddenly called to the business of the hour, by Joe Hume opening fire just over our heads. He spoke from what was, in the old House, his accustomed and recognised place, close by one of the pillars of the gallery, and near the end of the third opposition bench.

Mr. Hume rose to propose that Mr. Littleton, then M.P. for Staffordshire, (the present Lord Hatherton,) should take the chair. The Whig ministry proposed the former speaker, Mr. Manners Sutton, the late Lord Canterbury; and, on a division, carried it by a majority of eight or nine to one, but not till after a very animated debate, very exciting to us novices.

Manners Sutton *acted* speaker very well—perhaps a little *overacted* it; but certainly looked and filled the part well. His chief faults were an imperiousness and hastiness of temper, and a not entire forgetfulness of the partizan in the discharge of his duties as arbiter and president of a political assembly: occasionally allowing too much of the intolerant arrogance which his party affected towards the Radicals to peep out, when he had to do with members belonging to the latter political denomination.

My father used to say that for the first two years of his parliamentary life, he repeatedly remarked a deliberate neglect of him by the Speaker, when endeavouring to catch the latter's eye. But he always added that during the subsequent years, until Lord Canterbury's removal to the Upper House, matters were entirely changed in this respect, and there almost seemed, as it were, an anxiety to make a kind of *reparation*.

Among the various little things which showed his lordship's fondness for the externals of his dignity while Speaker, was the manner in which he used to keep in submissive attendance, at either side of his chair, the members who wanted to get his signature to the tickets of admission for strangers. This custom, fruitful in annoyance to members, and eminently so in disturbance to the business of the House, was done away with two years later, during the short speakership of Mr. Abercrombie, the present Lord Dunfermline.

As I shall have afterwards to speak of a much more interesting debate on a Speaker's election, that of the last-named noble lord, when the contest was between him and Lord Canterbury, in 1835, I pass from that of 1833, to the

opening of the *real* business of the session in that year.

The newly-elected Speaker having then duly gone through the chrysalis stage of the bobwig, (which is *de rigueur* before he is presented to the sovereign,) and thence emerged into the full-winged or full-wigged splendour of his confirmation in office, and the bulk of the members having dawdled through five or six days of oath-taking and roll-signing, we met at last as a duly constituted House of Commons, upon the 9th or 10th of February, about half an hour before his Majesty was expected down to Westminster to deliver the royal speech—opening the session in form.

Presently we heard at our door the customary three knocks, solemn and awful, which announce a special summons; and Sir Augustus Clifford stalked in, stately and stiff, and delivered his message, calling on us to attend his Majesty at the bar of the House of Lords. On all such occasions a pause ensues, evidently mercifully intended to give Sir Augustus Clifford time to save himself, ere the House break from their seats and rush, push, and scramble like a parcel of schoolboys

through the passages and even up to the very bar of the Lords; hurrying the unhappy Speaker before them like the sacrificial ox, urged along reluctant to the horns of the altar!

Even at this early stage of the session there was earnest given of the hostile spirit towards Ireland that was to mark its course. The only part of the speech of William IV. which his infirmities or his inclinations allowed him to deliver with any distinctness, was that in which he threatened Ireland: and even this agreeable topic did not give more dignity to his demeanour than that of *a good scold*!

We listened to the speech, and returned from the hearing with hearts full of bitterness; mitigated only by a feeling of pity for the statesmen who were thus so evidently bent upon throwing away the opportunities for fame that their somewhat unexpected success on one great question had opened to them with regard to others; above all, with regard to the yet unachieved object worthy of *real* statesmen—the pacific, equitable, and therefore mutually beneficial settlement, of the long-distracted international relations between Great Britain and Ireland.

In England there has been much outcry against Irish Repealers, for what is called their unwarrantable attacks on the Imperial Parliament, on the score of negligence or of hostility towards Ireland. Whether those attacks be justifiable or not, is a question with regard to which some materials for coming to a judgment may be supplied ere the closing of this record. The writer of it readily pleads guilty to the charge of being one of those who have made the attacks in question; but he does not so plead as having lightly come to the convictions which impelled them, or having entered Parliament with any predisposing prejudices. On the contrary, up to, and for some little while after the time when Irishmen of the popular party got admission to the British Parliament, there was, among the greater number of them in fact, a *credulity*, of which they have been long since painfully disabused, with regard to the dispositions of that Parliament. "Englishmen are just, Englishmen are fair-minded," was the cry; "they have done us wrong because they have not known us. Hitherto the representation of Ireland has been all in the hands of that faction in our country whose interest it ever has been to mis-

represent and to mislead the English with regard to the real state of things in Ireland. But now that the Irish people are, to some extent at least, directly represented—now that their state, wants, sufferings, and claims, will fairly and fully be exposed, Englishmen will see and acknowledge their error, and be prompt to do us justice.”

I do not mean to say that a soliloquy in the exact terms, and to the exact effect of the foregoing was delivered by the new Irish M.P.s on their first appearance on the parliamentary stage, but most certainly there were expectations and convictions to that effect; and most certainly, and most utterly have those expectations been disappointed.

It is nothing at all in answer to this to launch out into abuse of Irish popular members. The device is a favourite one, and very efficient in distracting attention from the parties really to blame. It tells, too, in Ireland, where it is not unusual to find a popular journal much more occupied with repeating those attacks, than in taking the right means of correcting the evil, (to whatever extent it may exist,) by assisting and forwarding the efforts that others may be engaged in, to excite

and sustain such a force and concentration of public opinion, and in especial, of the opinion of the constituencies, as would have real influence upon the offenders; a most desirable object, but not by any means attainable by mere newspaper scolding.

When we had all trooped back to our own house again, and re-taken our places, the debate on the Address in answer to the speech we had just heard was commenced by Lord Ormelie, the present Marquis of Breadalbane. It has been very currently and frequently said, that his lordship, at a period but a few years later, expressed some degree of regret for the part which he happened to take upon this occasion with reference to unfortunate Ireland. I shall therefore make no further criticism, or say nothing more at all in comment upon his speech, than that it was harsh and violent in its allusions to the "agitators," and expressed a full approval of the intention of the Government to make the crimes by which a portion of the peasantry of two or three counties of Ireland sought to avenge the wrongs they and their fellows suffered from harsh landlords, a pretext for putting down political agitation.

Lord Stanley,—that “lord of misrule” in the House of Commons, and political personification of the genius of mischief (sadly so in the case of poor Ireland,)—he who was the animating principle of the otherwise inert international hostility which so pervaded that and succeeding debates,—spoke towards the end of the night. Bitter and even spiteful as was his speech, yet its great ingenuity, aptness and striking ability of every kind, set off as those qualities were by his clear clarion voice and impressive delivery, commanded a considerable degree of admiration even from us.

The effect upon his own supporters was tremendous; and yet it was scarcely complimentary to him; for so open-mouthed were they against us, unfortunate Irish, that the pearls of Lord Stanley were hardly more relished than the garbage of some of our less noted and more clumsy assailants.

I know not how Lord Stanley would speak to an unfavourable audience. He has, even when well backed and supported, manifested great irritability and no little discomfiture at interruptions, whether casual or intentional. And even those who have had no personal experience in public

speaking will easily comprehend that it makes a potent difference to the orator, whether his auditory shout *with* him, or *at* him.

At the time I speak of, Lord Stanley had certainly nothing to complain of as regarded support. Out of an average attendance of 500 and upwards, during the Coercion Bill Debate in 1833, considerably more than 400 chorussed their "most sweet voices" on every possible occasion in his favour, and against us. In fact, the coming into Parliament of a body of Irish popular representatives, numerous enough to be *noticeable*, while still far too few to be formidable, was a kind of *providence* to the two great English parties, which had so recently been tearing each other's eyes out. To them it was a comfort to have a third party to be made the scape-goats of their mutual bitter-nesses; and the chance was not the less welcome, that in so using it they could "*feed fat the ancient grudge*" of *their* country against *ours*.

There can be nothing more sad than to think upon that "ancient grudge." Two countries placed so near each other, so mutually necessary, so capable of mutual benefit, and of a high and surpassing degree of common prosperity, achiev-

able by combined effort and mutual assistance ; yet so divided—so morally separated—almost, nay in fact, so mutually hostile—can there be a spectacle more sad, more depressing than this ?

As one, however humble, of the “ *Agitators*,” who, in their endeavours to teach the Irish people not to look to other than themselves for political redemption, have had, from time to time, to “point our moral” with instances from history of the systematic misgovernment and ill-treatment of Ireland, I must expect to be included in the usual accusation against us of having aided to nourish and perpetuate the feelings we deplore.

It is an unwarrantable accusation. But we shall be found ready to allow judgment to go by default against us, if those in England who scarcely can deny the heavy part they have borne in bringing matters to this pass, or keeping them there, shall unburden their souls and confess.

While awaiting such general and *generous* acknowledgment, it is but justice to record that, with respect to Lord Stanley’s *razzia* upon Ireland in 1833, more than one English member has since been heard to express sincere and most honourable

regret at having allowed himself to be deluded by that noble lord's skilful misrepresentation and distortion of facts, into voting for the suppression of Ireland's constitutional liberties, under pretext of checking agrarian crime.

It was when the Coercion Bill, (after having been stoutly battled through the three earlier stages, viz., leave to bring in—first and second reading,) had got into committee, that the battle for the first time seemed to be on something like fair terms.

Not that any material difference occurred in the respective numbers; although undoubtedly we did get now and then an occasional recruit, when some particularly monstrous clause was being discussed. Neither was it by any means that any greater inclination to show fair play had sprung up among our multitudinous opponents. The war certainly did not fail of itself; and "Stanley was the cry" quite as loud as ever; whensoever Stanley chose to get on his legs.

The change was owing simply to the rule that allows members to speak as often as they please when the House is in committee.

In each of the previous stages of the Coercion

Bill, my father could speak but once ; and after he had concluded his speech, was compelled to silence while made the target for every "fool's bolt" during the remainder of that debate. But in committee he was free to meet every charge, answer every argument, throw back every taunt, and crush with overpowering ridicule every puny assailant, without fear of being called to order on the ground of having already spoken. And when he could no longer be taken at advantage, the virulence of the attacks upon him and upon his country, *through him*, was much abated, or in a manner postponed until the next *safe* opportunity of giving it vent.

His labour, however, was greatly increased. He was up upon every point, and ready *at* every point. Explaining, remonstrating, arguing, refuting, suggesting, predicting, he left scarcely anything for any one else upon his side to do, and was more than a match for the numerous defenders, official and *officious*, of the contested provisions of the bill.

This credit may be allowed to him without in the least derogating from the merits of those who took part on the same side in the debates.

Other Irishmen rendered excellent service ; and it would be great ingratitude indeed if the exertions of such men as Mr. Hume, Mr. Warburton, Mr. Aglionby, Major Beauclerk, Mr. Ewart, Mr. Gillon, and others among the English and Scotch members—to say nothing of (last but not least), the present Attorney-General, Sir John Jervis, were not paid the poor tribute of being mentioned, when speaking or writing of the able, vigorous, and most constitutional opposition made to Lord Stanley's iniquitous Coercion Bill of 1833.

I do not remember at what exact period of the discussions upon that bill Sir Robert Peel addressed the House ; but I well remember my anxiety to hear him, and the impression which he then made upon me, and which has not varied during the nineteen sessions that have since elapsed.

There is an elaborateness and an unmistakable evidence of art about all Sir Robert Peel's great displays, detracting materially from their effect. The observation struck me as very apt which I once heard from a lady on her first visit to the "Ventilator" (the "*Ladies' Gallery*" of the old house), that Sir R. Peel's manner and delivery

were those of a clever schoolboy speaking a prize oration,—fluently, stiffly, and grandiloquently.

After getting accustomed to these peculiarities,—and you require to be accustomed to them—real admiration begins. The thorough knowledge and management of his audience, playing with the hand of a master upon their passions and prejudices (for, *strange* to say, passions and prejudices *do* prevail, *even* in the House of Commons), the skill, a little too evident, but yet very superior of its kind, with which he manages, when his purpose requires it, to wrap up a heap of nothings in a cloud of fine words, while at another moment he expresses in a sentence what it would cost an inferior man a whole speech to convey; the closeness and vigour of his reasoning, however defective the premises may be, his intimate and profound acquaintance with every department, and with the most intricate matters of public business—all these striking qualities command for him the rivetted attention of the House, and make even his opponents forget, for the time, the artifices, the plausibilities, and the common-places which must ever keep him below the first rank among orators.

Peel mistook his vocation ! He should have gone to the bar. The character of his mind, the bent of his genius, both tended that way ; and in the labyrinths of special pleading, and the strife to make the wrong appear the better reason, none could have surpassed, and few could have come near him. Important amendments too in the letter and the working of the laws, and, doubtless, in their spirit also, would have resulted from the constant and close attention to them of so clear a judgment, and so penetrating and practical a spirit.

As it is, he has but served the passing interests and exigencies of a party, the most unscrupulous, exacting, and ungrateful that ever politician's lot was cast with ; and the two occasions in his life when he broke through his trammels, and dared to act the statesman, and not the mere party-man, have outweighed with them the devotedness of all the rest of his career, and the services which none other could have rendered.

There are mighty opportunities before him still. Ireland is still the great difficulty of the empire, and a difficulty that must be speedily looked at full in the face, and finally settled ; otherwise it

will solve and settle itself in disaster and ruin. For whom is this great task reserved? Which shall, Peel or Russell, render this great and paramount service to the empire, and win this great glory for their name? Or shall both be found unequal to the task, and the inevitable and deplorable alternative be left to its accomplishment?

CHAPTER II.

IRISH ELECTIONS.—FEARGUS O'CONNOR.—THE ELECTION DINNER.—
REPEAL AGITATION.—A NATIONAL COUNCIL.—IRISH POPULAR PRESS.
COBBETT VERSUS PLUNKETT.—“AN IRISH PEER.”—VISCOUNT TAP-
LOW.—MR. O'CONNELL'S TAIL.—CHURCH TEMPORALITIES BILL.—
NEGRO EMANCIPATION AN ACT OF JUSTICE.—NO JUSTICE FOR IRE-
LAND.

THE Irish popular members in 1833 were certainly discomfited, *morally* as well as physically, by the reception they encountered from the myrmidons of Lord Stanley. Men whom the strength of the popular sentiment in Ireland had suddenly impelled or assisted forward to places in the parliamentary representation of their country, contrary in most cases to their own expectations, as well as in some cases to their inclination and habits, were naturally impressed with a respect for the power which had thus advanced them, and as naturally led to conclude that others would esteem it as highly as themselves.

They had little imagined at what an infinite discount in England have been and are, all manifestations of Irish opinion and feeling, when unaccompanied by the immediate and evident jeopardy of some English interest.

It is, of course, but natural that the people of one country should be too much absorbed by their own concerns to pay attention to those of the people of another; and especially this is natural where there is domination on the one side and subjection on the other. But natural as it may be, it is not the less grievous and exasperating.

The elections of 1832-33, in Ireland, were marked by a more general outburst of popular feeling than had been witnessed in that country before. Individual instances there had been, and truly magnificent instances, of what the Irish people could do, on a fitting occasion and for a worthy object. In Waterford, in 1826, and in Clare, in the ever-memorable election of 1828, this had been abundantly and, I repeat the epithet, *magnificently* demonstrated. But no general effort had been made really *by* the people and *for* the people until the period we have mentioned, namely, the winter of 1832-3, when thirty-eight

or forty of the Irish members were returned on the popular or Repeal interest—the Repeal being then for the first time made an election question.

Perhaps the queerest election that occurred in the three kingdoms was that of Feargus O'Connor as a member for the important county of Cork. Without money and without previous influence, personal or political, an unknown and not over-wealthy squire of an obscure part of the county, set out to attack and overturn the influence and sway of the most powerful and richest landed aristocracy in Ireland; and, thanks to his indomitable energy and audacity, and to the ready and ardent patriotism of the people, which only required to be called into action, he succeeded.

One little incident will be enough to give an idea of his campaign. It was thought advisable by himself and others that his candidateship should not appear to be altogether of his own devising, but that something like an invitation to him, or at least a sanction to his coming forward, should emanate from some portion of the constituency.

How this was to be brought about was the difficulty. A prophet is said never to be in

honour in his own country ; and Feargus had at least so much in common with the prophets. To use an ungainly but expressive word, which seems thoroughly adopted from the French, his *antece-dents* had brought him as little regard and respect with any party, as his subsequent history up to the present moment.

Done, however, this was ; and no matter by what manœuvring it was effected, the public announcement of it was creditable enough. Not only an invitation to come forward as a parliamentary candidate was addressed to Feargus O'Connor ; but some thirty or forty of the stout yeomen farmers of the county requested the honour of his gracious company to a public entertainment.

The dinner took place. There was plenty of mutton ; plenty of good hot punch, and more than a plenty of speechifying. Feargus *out-feargused* himself in his acknowledgments to the *large* and enlightened body of the electors of the county by whom he had the pleasure to see himself surrounded, and who had proved their wisdom and judgment by naming as their future member so devoted, disinterested, and talented a gentleman

as himself. The orator rattled on—the auditory shouted on, (moistening their throats abundantly the while)—the night wore on till long past the witching hour, when all who were capable of motion went off in one fashion or other; and Feargus himself took his departure, full of glory, to his own domicile; unconscious of the *amare aliquid* which awaited him there in the shape of a bill for *the entire cost of the dinner* and, (according to some versions of the story,) for the stabling of the farmers' horses, while their owners were *entertaining* him!

In his canvass he was assisted by, and in his turn rendered back the same assistance to his cousin, O'Neill Daunt, then standing, and afterwards elected, for the borough of Mallow. Between them both the plan of taking county and borough aristocrats simultaneously by surprise had been concocted and carried out by both with infinite cleverness; but Daunt, although very far superior to O'Connor in information, tastes, habits of life, and general ability, was no match for him in dexterity, and had a lamentable proof of it on one occasion in particular, when as both stood on the hustings, Daunt, to his dismay and horror, had

to listen while Feargus delivered *ore rotundo*, and greatly to the admiration of the multitude, the very speech that Daunt himself had most carefully prepared for that particular occasion; Feargus having during their journey to the place of meeting most industriously and successfully *pumped* his unsuspecting companion of his tropes and topics, and, in short, all his treasured eloquence!

Longford, Meath, King's and Queen's County, Kildare, Kilkenny county and city, Clonmel, Ross, Youghal, and other counties, cities and towns bore good witness, as well as Cork county and Mallow borough, at this general election to the determination of the people in favour of the new agitation for repeal. The agitation indeed was new, but the subject itself was long familiar and dear to their hearts. The people of Ireland had never acquiesced in the degradation of their country by the Legislative Union. To the utmost that their voice could be raised they had protested against it in 1799 and 1800; and during the thirty years that had elapsed since the latter year their continued aversion to that disastrous measure had been manifested at every possible opportunity.

The struggle for Catholic Emancipation had intervened to occupy their attention and engross their energies, but what they ever recognised as the *great question*—that of Ireland's legislative independence, was never forgotten: and the moment that the passing of the Emancipation Act disembarrassed them of one struggle, they girt up their loins readily, cheerfully, and eagerly to engage in another.

Had not my father shown them that he was as ready to lead them on in the repeal agitation as he had been in the one just then brought to a triumphant conclusion, they would have passed him by, and gone forward at the call, and under the disastrous guidance of the first wild and reckless adventurer that presented himself with the magic rallying cry of "repeal" upon his lips.

Even Feargus O'Connor might, in such a contingency, have got at least temporarily into the ascendant; and done as much mischief to the liberal cause, and as much service to the enemies of the people in Ireland, as he has managed to do in England.

We had a "*national council*" of all our new-fledged repeal members in Dublin a week before

the opening of the session of 1833; and had indulged in some day dreams as to the influence which its deliberations might have in both countries; and the energetic unity of action in Parliament that might be amongst its results.

But within the narrow compass of five or six days, which was all that could be spared for the purpose between the last of the elections and the meeting of Parliament, it was impracticable, especially with men for the most part new to public business, to shape out any very definite conclusions; and so little more was realized by our meetings than the making us mutually acquainted.

The tribute is due to the gentlemen who then assembled, to say of them, that, new to Parliament as they were, and severe and sudden as was the change from the applause and enthusiasm with which they had been surrounded at their elections, to the jibes, sneers, attacks, and hostile shouts of an overwhelming majority ranged against them and against their country, scarce one of them quailed, or proved otherwise unworthy of his trust.

The Irish popular *M.P.* has a difficult charge of it when he is faithful to his constituency and country, and anxious to be active in their service. In the first place, he has to enter and labour in a House, in which, notwithstanding all the fair professions that are made, the immense majority are more or less prejudiced against everything Irish;—and prejudiced from childhood and by education. In the next place, the limited and grievously restricted nature of the Parliamentary franchise given to Ireland by her Reform Bill, and the farther limitations which its connexion with the tenure of land enables the larger proprietors, (of whom unhappily for all parties very many are hostile to popular rights,) to impose and effect; operate so to restrict and hamper the wishes and the choice of the constituencies, as not only to make few in number, but still fewer in spirit and efficiency, the *real* Representatives of the Irish people.

Such of those representatives, therefore, as seek to be active, must fight their way through a thousand discouragements; getting little countenance and less assistance from their own friends; and sure to be assailed without mercy by the

thronging host of those who see in Ireland only a turbulent province, which is best ruled when her cries are choked down in her throat by the strong hand of arbitrary power.

There is not quite a sufficient recollection of these circumstances in the harsh judgments which the Irish popular press so frequently pass upon the Irish members returned on the popular interest. There cannot, of course, be a doubt that within reasonable limits nothing can be more useful, or indeed necessary, than the surveillance of the press over the conduct of public men; but when any and every occasion is taken to assail, and vague and general accusations are thrown out and argued upon as if they were specific facts, while everything at all creditable to the accused is omitted, the only purpose served is to disconcert and distract still more the popular mind, to the great profit and satisfaction of the enemy.

While we regret, however, this useless and mischievous practice of incessant carping, sneering at, and attacking, with scarcely any discrimination, and often with the slenderest possible foundation, men who have quite difficulties enough

in England to encounter, without having any addition made to them from *home*, it must be allowed to be only what is naturally to be expected in an oppressed and degraded country. Slaves are ever found to be ready to attack their fellow-slaves; to the infinite joy and advantage of the common oppressor.

The remark is trite, that few men from whom anything is expected, and who come late in life into Parliament, ever realize the expectations formed of them. Cobbett was an instance of this: his parliamentary displays falling very short indeed in quality and effect, of his clear, pungent, and powerful writings.

Still there was much to attract attention. In speech and delivery he was quite as dogmatical and as *downright* as in his written diatribes; and he had quite as much sarcastic audacity of self-possession as though he were a wealthy patrician-member of that tuft-hunting House.

The name of Lord Plunkett, then, and for some years later, Lord Chancellor of Ireland, having been mixed up with our earlier debates on the Coercion Bill, owing to a quotation by one of our party from his lordship's ancient denunciations of

the Legislative Union, Cobbett took the noble chancellor in hand. The latter, when a member of the Irish House of Commons in 1799, had spoken thus:—

“ I, in the most express terms, deny the competency of Parliament to pass this act (Union); I warn you, do not dare to lay your hands upon the Constitution. I tell you that if you do pass it, it will be a mere nullity, and no man in Ireland will be bound to obey it. . . . You are appointed to make laws, not legislatures; . . . to exercise the functions of legislators, not to transfer them; and if you do so, your act is a dissolution of the government, and no man in the land is bound to obey you!”

And the Patriot (as he was *then*) finished his powerful harangue with a declaration, that if the Union passed into a law, he would imitate the Carthaginian father, by swearing his sons upon the altar to an eternal hostility!

Cobbett dwelt heavily on the contrast between such speeches and his lordship's conduct, in being accessary, as an influential member of the Irish Government, to the attempt then making to confound a legal and constitutional agitation in the

same penal repression with agrarian outrage and murder.

But the grand point was the HAMILCAR pledge. From a document with which he had taken care to provide himself, Cobbett read out slowly and with most distinct and sarcastic emphasis, name after name of son, son-in-law, and relative of Lord Plunkett's, who had been snugly provided for one way or other since the Union; without anything having been heard of the undying hatred and hostility to which they were to have been pledged as regarded that measure. As he finished the description of the place and emoluments which each enjoyed, Cobbett, with his hands in his pockets, and occasionally turning his back, in not the most orderly way, to the Treasury Bench, while he looked full in our amused and responsive countenances, wound up with,

“*There's a pretty Hannibal for you!*”

As if their degradation by the provisions of the Union-Act were not enough for them, our unfortunate Irish lords have too often of their own act further degraded themselves. Plunkett has not only totally *ignored* his pledge before-mentioned, but has done Janissary work for the

English upholders of the Union, by a letter which he published some years ago, regretting that he had ever had the manliness to be a patriot.

In one of his last decisions, just before the Whigs put him on the shelf, he had to review a case that had once been in the Irish House of Lords. After declaring his reasons for dissenting from the conclusions which had appeared to have been come to there, he ended with the sneering remark, “So much for your *Irish* lords!”

“He is quite right,” said a young barrister, “the Irish lords are indeed fallen into contempt. He knew his condition when he spoke.”

The designation of “an Irish Peer,” is a matter of jest and laughter in the English pot-houses. The idea of a peer without rights—a peer in name, and in one or two pitiful privileges, but not in that which in this aristocratic country is *the* great and essential quality of a peer—the quality of a hereditary legislator.

Our Irish premier nobleman—our only *Duke*, sits in the English legislature, not in virtue of his nominally high rank in Ireland, but by the not

very euphonious nor exalted English title of
“ *Viscount Taplow!* ”

The discussions on the Coercion Bill went their course slowly, by reason of our determined and unwearying opposition; and as they proceeded became more and more marked with acerbity, and indeed with not a little violence. In truth, it may be said, (and any one who witnessed, and still bears in mind the incidents of that period, will not consider it an exaggeration,) that there were not a few nights when, so great was the storm brewed against us by the genius of mischief, Lord Stanley, that a proposition to turn the Irish members out of the House would have been hailed and carried with eager acclamation.

I have already alluded to the impressions made upon some of us parliamentary novices, when we first heard Sir Robert Peel. In doing so I have spoken more of the manner, than of the matter and bearing of his speech.

I must confess to the folly of having entertained a species of bastard hope as to the line he would take. I thought it might be, that he would, by withstanding the current then setting so hotly against Ireland, have at length made some little

reparation for the many mischiefs done her during his tenure of office. I know not whether this not very sapient expectation was based upon one, or upon a combination of two possibilities (of which only the latter had any *probability* about it)—first, that he might have the grace to repent of his old offences against Ireland; and secondly, that he would take the opportunity, which opposing the Coercion Bill would give, of annoying and embarrassing the Whigs.

My delusion, however it arose, was very short-lived indeed. The right honourable gentleman's speech was all that Lord Stanley's heart could wish — unfair, unjust, calumnious, and severe towards Ireland. As a mere party politician, Sir Robert Peel had, perhaps, no other course to take; derogatory as it was to his claims to be considered a statesman.

His party, who had by no means forgiven, nor forgotten, what they deemed his treachery at the time of the Relief Bill in the year 1829, would have totally and utterly abandoned him, had he neglected so fair an opportunity of leading them on to have their revenge on the Irish agitators, and ultimately on the English Reformers.

The Irish agitators were to be punished for the double offence of having effected the defeat of the Tory party in 1829, and having potently assisted in their defeat in 1842. The English Reformers, again, were ultimately to be reached by the operation of the bad and dangerous precedents, and the innovations on popular liberty, to which an adroit playing on their anti-Irish feelings and ignorant prejudices was inducing them to be accessory.

The speech in question was most unjust and unfair, and, in truth, even calumnious; inasmuch as it confounded every species of manifestation of popular discontent in a common reprobation with agrarian crime; and inflamed the passions of his auditory with a highly-coloured melodramatic description of an *outrage perpetrated thirteen years before*, as a reason for crushing political liberty at the time he was speaking.

The House, which always shows a timid obsequiousness and a corresponding adulatory spirit to Sir Robert Peel, cheered him to the echo; and for the while it seemed as if his recent losses and defeats were all at once retrieved, and that he was once again the leader and master of a sweeping majority.

Early in the session Cobbett made a motion for an address to His Majesty to remove Sir Robert Peel's name from the roll of the privy council. The cause assigned was, the mischievous effects, according to Cobbett, of Peel's currency policy. I was one of four unfortunates who, amid the laughter and jeers of the House, went out in favour of the motion when the division came. I did so, not for Cobbett's reasons, but my own—viz. the mischiefs done to Ireland by the object of his wrath. It was not a very *legitimate*, but neither was it a very unnatural vote.

The speech of Emerson Tennant, then M.P. for Belfast (at present secretary to the Governor of the Ionian Isles, and known as Sir James Emerson,) which was violently in favour of the Coercion Bill, gave occasion to a pardonable *pun* on the part of one of our men, James Roe, M.P. for Cashel—one of the best and truest of our band. Alluding at once to the cant name given in the House to the Irish M.P.s, that of being O'Connell's "*tail*," and to the suspicion that had attached to Mr. Emerson Tennant's then recent conversion from ultra-republicanism to arbitrary principles of government—(a conversion not very

charitably but very generally attributed to a desire of getting place)—Mr. Roe remarked:—“It is quite clear that gentleman is not a *tenant in tail*, though he may be a *tenant in fee*!”

Another of our men, the excellent and most respectable Mr. Lalor, then M. P. for Queen's County, is said to have snatched the occasion for a pun in his own plain country dialect, from the circumstance of seeing Mr. Pease, the Quaker member for Darlington, and the late Mr. Baines, M. P. for Leeds, come into the House together. “Oh,” said he, “we are well off now—for here we have *Paas and Baans* (peas and beans) at the same time.”

Sharp and angry as were the debates on the two important subjects that came on the tapis next after the passing of the Coercion Bill, namely, the re-arrangement of Church Temporalities in Ireland, and the Abolition of Negro Slavery, they brought relief to us, poor hunted-down Irish members. We had no longer to bear the brunt of the whole war—to be perpetually on the *qui vive* to repel attacks, watch backsliders, and encourage friends. We were no longer a scanty band, struggling vainly against

an overwhelming and tyrant majority; but men acting in concert with one of the great English parties in the House, and inevitably voting in the same divisions with many of those who had been lately among our fiercest assailants.

Of the Church Temporalities Bill, as it was not a measure of remedy or relief of so heavy a national grievance as the Church Establishment in Ireland, but a mere re-arrangement of some of the latter's details, I shall say nothing more than that it was amusing to see the paralysis, as it were, of astonishment caused in many of those who had recently been enthusiastically praising, cheering, and following Lord Stanley, by the cavalier manner in which he knocked down bishop after bishop, and partitioned or re-partitioned, reduced or consolidated, the various money-getting posts of the Establishment.

I should say, that on *this* bill several of us Catholic Members did not vote at all;—not because we conceived that any subject within the province of Parliament could rightfully be *tabooed* to us—but as a matter of feeling. If such a thing *could* happen as that the internal concerns of our Church, by any misfortune, hap-

pened to come under discussion in Parliament, we should not much relish their being handled by those who differ from us in religion; and we therefore in this case only did as, in the case just supposed, we should have wished others to do by us. The mixed divisions, therefore, to which I have alluded, were not upon the Temporalities question, but on that of Negro Emancipation.

The step with reference to the latter that was taken by Parliament in the session of 1833, was one that has been much and variously, but very unjustly assailed. It was a *noble* act! Paltry and unworthy motives may be, and have been, assigned for it; and undoubtedly such motives had influence, and extensive influence. But it is still more unworthy than the worst of these motives, to deny the general praise of magnificent generosity to the people of these realms, for their having so generally sanctioned the large expenditure of twenty millions, to purchase the enfranchisement of the West Indian negroes.

That our poor Irish people should give their sanction, was natural enough.

“A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind!”

And the fellow feeling of degradation and oppression naturally inclined them to sympathise with the negro. But that England and Scotland—rich, money getting, money loving—looking upon feeling and sentimentality as little less than a crime, and as the absurdest of follies—should with so little remonstrance, nay, with so much cheerfulness of assent, allow so large a sum to be abstracted from the national resources, and *sunk* as it were in what the not very amiable nor over-enlightened class who are specially called “practical men,” stigmatized as a dangerous and extravagant experiment,—this argues a fund of native rectitude—much overlaid and deeply hidden—but still existing, and sound at bottom, that goes far to redeem and wipe out the memory of years of questionable and guilty acts.

No doubt the parties who got the money had no real title to it; and no doubt at all that to call it “compensation,” or “indemnity,” or “purchase-money,” was and is an abuse of terms, and an insult to humanity. There *could* be no *right of property* of one human being in another; and if “indemnity,” or “compensation,” were words at all to be used, they should have been employed to

signify what was due *from*, and not *to*, the holders of slaves.

Human slavery is an outrage of natural right and natural law, which no lapse of time, and no combination of circumstances, can make a rightful and a just state of things. Whosoever is party to it, whether by drawing profit therefrom, or giving it a tacit sanction where his denunciation might have effect, is guilty of fraud and robbery of the worst kind; and in the eye of the moralist is bound to make restitution and retribution quite as stringently—nay, far more so—than the man who plunders another of sums of money, or lawful money's worth. The owners and holders of West Indian estates had therefore no species of *right* whatever to the money given them by Parliament in 1833,—nay, ought not to have touched it at all, save as for the purpose of handing it over directly and totally to their black fellow-creatures, whom they had unlawfully and criminally held in bondage.

But with these considerations the grant of the money by the British people had nothing at all to do: except in so far as it was a noble atonement for whatever share of guilt was involved in

their having previously tolerated the holding of slaves by the colonists. Under all aspects, this vote of the House of Commons, so little opposed in the country, so little repented of since, so readily and unhesitatingly sanctioned, was an act that has cast lustre on the British name, far beyond what could attach to it from the most brilliant victories, and the most extensive conquests in war.

Why is it that a nation capable of such acts as these—with so many sterling qualities of head and heart in the aggregate as well as in the individual—appears to be utterly incapable of justice or reason, where Ireland is concerned; and prefers the precarious bond of force to hold the latter, rather than the far more enduring and indissoluble ties of conciliated and grateful affection, mutual respect and mutual interest?

It is hard to over-calculate the degree of prosperity to which the United Kingdom might attain, if Ireland were but conciliated. If so much has been accomplished while a large portion of the resources of the empire were hampered and crippled by the necessity of holding down and watching Ireland, what might not be the

result, if kindly and just treatment towards the latter not only removed these impediments and stays, but liberated also the abounding resources of Ireland, to bear their part in advancing and promoting the common weal !

But, unhappily, it is idle to make these reflections. Prejudice and short-sightedness must have their way, and work out their own sad results. And yet how easily might not those results be averted !

CHAPTER III.

THE "IRISH MEMBERS."—IRISH PECULIARITIES.—THE BROGUE.—ENGLISH AND SCOTCH PRONUNCIATION.—IRISH ENERGY.—CHURCH TEMPORALITIES, AND COERCION BILLS.—THE CHARTISTS.—RESULTS OF THE SESSION.—SUPPRESSION OF POPULAR OPINION IN IRELAND.—MR. MONTGOMERY MARTIN.—ARREST OF MR. O'CONNELL.—TOM STEELE.

NOTHING more forcibly strikes an Irishman, upon his entrance into and first acquaintance with the House of Commons, than the discourteousness among themselves of his brother-members belonging to the sister-countries; especially, or at any rate most evidently, of those belonging to England.

And this applies not only to men sitting at different sides of the House, for whom the excuse of the excitement of conflicting opinions might be pleaded; but to men sitting and voting at the same side, and in many cases known to, and acting with each other through several successive

parliaments. A set of village school-boys could not be more unceremonious with each other.

It would be absurd to deny that the House contains many deserving to be ranked among those whom the *phrase banale* of George the Fourth's time would describe as "the first gentlemen of Europe." But it would be equally absurd to contend that the natural *gêne* and cold abrupt manner of the Englishman does not break through all the lackering derived from position, careful teaching, and finished art.

Despite the severity of the proverbs against him, the Scot will often display an easier and a kinder manner than his "Southron" neighbour, who seems haunted with a constant terror of committing himself. The bluntness which is common to both is mixed up with frankness in the former case, but with a cold misgiving reserve in the latter.

I am, of course, speaking of mere manner; and am not at all desirous of entering into a disquisition upon more important qualities. As to graver defects, and as to sterling virtues, of character and conduct, the representatives of the two countries, like those from whom they have

received their respective missions, are pretty much on a par; and all that need be further said of them is, that it is to be regretted they do not correct the one, and in their dealings with poor Ireland, give her the benefit of the other.

But as the name of Ireland here obtrudes itself, as it does in everything and everywhere, a word or two suggest themselves with reference to the Irish members, in the particulars of manner and outward habit of bearing just alluded to in the case of their legislative colleagues of England and of Scotland.

The "Irish Members" have long been *game* to the many small, and few and far-between *great* wits of the metropolis. A vigilant and most unsparing criticism, perhaps a little smacking of international antipathies, has most carefully

"Set in a note-book,—learn'd and conn'd by rote."

every defect, every chance peculiarity of manner and of speech, that have marked, or by any ingenuity could be attributed to, these deputies from the modern Carthage to the modern Rome.

By a kind of prescription, the term "Irish Members" has most constantly been understood

to apply, and been applied, to that portion of them who were more immediately identified with popular opinions in Ireland, and returned on popular principles. The Irish Members returned upon *other* principles, showed themselves, at least such of them as were in the House during my earlier parliamentary experiences, only too glad to have us so called; partly because they looked to further enlisting English prejudices against the popular party of Ireland, and partly through a bastard hope of being considered genteelly *English* themselves. And we have not been at all reluctant to accept of the designation, believing ourselves the best entitled to it, in its true and honourable sense. But since the extreme struggle of English parties has terminated, a new order of things, as well as a new set of gentlemen on the benches of the *Anglo-Irish* members, is to be remarked; and while under the one a distinction is no longer recognised among the representatives of Ireland, neither do the other claim it, at least by any means so eagerly and anxiously, as was the wont of their remarkably "genteel" predecessors. The national peculiarities of the Conservative Irishman are as eagerly noted, and as much

exulted over *now*, when the break-up of English parties makes it of less importance to keep him in good humour, as ever have been those of the roughest and readiest Repealer.

Of Irish peculiarities, the most noticeable is of course the “brogue,” with all its varieties, distinguishable so readily by our ears, but by those of a “Saxon” confounded all in one hideous *cacophony*. There is the lounging, easy-going, drawling, saucy-toned Dublin accent; with the several variations upon it that mark nearly all the other counties of the province of Leinster. Then follow the plain, outspoken, unmitigated roughness of Waterford; the voluble, and somewhat sing-song brogue of the beautiful city and county of Cork;—that of Tipperary, rough and racy of the soil, even as the Tipperary men themselves;—Limerick, with its tones more *grasseyant*, but quite as unmistakeable; Clare, and “the kingdom” of Kerry, rapid, harsh, and fierce in sound; and finally, the infinite sub-varieties of brogue throughout the province of Connaught, running through the whole diapason of discord.

The North can be dismissed in a very few words. Take all the varieties and sub-varieties of

all the other districts or provinces, and engraft them respectively upon the stiffest and most uncouth specimen of broad lowland Scotch, and thus, with the exception of a few scattered districts, chiefly in the north-west of Ulster, where the aboriginal brogue "is yet to be found in all its pristine purity and richness," you have the "human voice divine," as it issues from the fancies of a North of Ireland man!

No doubt all these accents are exceedingly disagreeable to "polite" English ears; and in the House of Commons we get proofs enough that the "*lingua Inglese in bocca Irlandese*," is not at all pleasant to our British and North-British colleagues; but they have the remedy in their own hands. *We* do not quarrel with the brogue; we are very well content with it at home, and with our own portion of it; and we would gladly spare Englishmen and Scotchmen the annoyances of it, if enabled to do so by their consenting to dismiss us home, there to discuss in our own way, and in our own way to settle, our own affairs.

There is one accent, however, or mongrel mixture of accents, which receives no mercy in

Ireland. It is the worst, and most unpardonable of all ear-grievances, and a heavy aggravation of all and every species of the brogue. I speak of the attempt, unhappily not uncommon, to *plate* the latter over, as it were, with the choicest specimens of cockneyism!

A certain most highly respectable gentleman of the western province of Ireland, now some time dead, was much noted for this. Of him it was commonly remarked, that his accent was rather "*too English for the English themselves!*" It was also commonly reported that once when he was passing through a village-town where he expected to find post-commands for himself and a neighbouring baronet, at whose house he happened to be residing, something like the following question and answer were overheard at the Post-office window, between him and the official within:—

"Any *letta-s* (*letters*), pray, for Sir John——?" (pronouncing the Sir John as if spelled *Sir-jin*, and to the ear of the unsophisticated post-master as if it were "*Surgeon*," a grade usually confounded in Ireland with that of physician, under the common designation of *doctor*.)

“No, Sir, there’s nothing here for any *Docther* at all!”

There was in the House of Commons at the period of the Coercion Bill for Ireland, introduced by Lord Stanley, and at a much later period,—perhaps even at the present day there may be still, as we might find, were there a Parliamentary Guide-book at hand,—another equally respectable gentleman from Ireland, though not from the province of Connaught, heavily afflicted with the same malady which Richard Sheil would not hesitate to denominate “complicated cacophony.” In general he began his speeches, and often every sentence in his speeches, with specimens of the purest classic of Cockaigne; but the dear country was ever sure to assert itself in honest unmistakable brogue before he could deliver himself of a dozen words. It was his custom most sedulously and laboriously to fine off the concluding letter of *omne quod exit in R*, into a vowel; making compensation, however, when he encountered that canine consonant in the middle of a word by rattling it off his tongue with redoubled vehemence and roundness. Such words as “Chancellor” and Exchequer” were etherealized into

something quite beyond all imitation or conception; while "*property*" and "*Ireland*"

" Roused us like a rattling peal of thunder !"

The individual in question is a gentleman of good social position and private estimation ; highly intelligent and capable. We used to regret that a man perfectly well qualified to take and hold a position of respectable influence in the House, should thus, no doubt quite unconsciously, expose himself to the ridicule, not only of those whose opinions he would value, but of persons far his inferiors in good qualities and abilities.

In short, we used to wish that he

" Could hear himself as others heard him ;"

and he, doubtless, has often returned the friendly wish ; doubtless, too, with far more good reason, appropriateness, and necessity, at least in so far as his present commentator is concerned.

But the laugh is not always against Irishmen alone, upon the score of accent. Almost every Englishman in the House adds to the difficulties of the vexed question of the Poor-Law, by calling it the "POOR-LAWR." And, indeed,

generally speaking the *r* is in great requisition at the end of all words terminating with a vowel.

I recollect, too, an English baronet exceedingly severe upon something which he stigmatized as an “*Hirish* way of doing business, that he *’oped* the *’Ouse* would never consent to —”

And we *have* heard Scotchman calling unto Scotchman—(the one in a high position in the House, the other awaiting a summons at the Bar of the same,)—in something of the following style:—

“*Musther Jems (James) ——!*

“*Repurrt, Sir!*”

“Please to bring it up!” &c. &c. &c.

A second much laughed at peculiarity of the Irish M.P.s, is their warmth in speaking, and violence of gesture.

To this, as to the “brogue,” we simply plead “*Guilty!*” When we *are* in earnest, we cannot help *seeming* so; and it requires a long experience and practice in England for us to know how to freeze or *starch* ourselves up, like our respected fellow-subjects “to the manner born.” Irish persons long resident in England do indeed, at length, attain this knowledge; and, in fact, as

generally happens with imitators, rather *overdo* the thing. But it is a hard and disagreeable lesson.

A fair countrywoman, married most happily in England, once told me that notwithstanding the great and constant kindness of the family and friends of her excellent husband, yet she lived in a continual tremor lest she might give offence, by not being cold, reserved, and distant enough to suit the society in which she moved.

Again, there is another consideration which ought to be admitted by our censors as some palliation for our crime of *lèse-retenu*. Poor Sisyphus would scarcely have been criticised for the sweats upon his doomed brow, in his never-ending labours to roll up the ever-rebounding stone of his punishment. And is not *our* labour *Sisyphean*, in its painful and unintermitting fruitlessness, when session after session we vainly try to impress upon the English mind the real miseries of unhappy Ireland, and their real and only remedies!

After that magniloquent comparison and metaphor, we must return to *our muttons*.

The extreme excitement of the early part of

the Parliamentary campaign of 1833 had its reaction, like all other excitements. The session began—

—— “ Gay, desperate, dashing, down-hilly,
And ended as dull as a six-inside dilly.”

It can scarcely be necessary to remark, that these *Experiences* can have no pretensions whatever to the accurate particularity of a historical review, or record, and therefore do not require a methodical settling down of events in their due order, with disquisitions upon each. I merely note down, then, that among the few remaining occurrences of interest in the first session of the first reformed Parliament, were, the abandonment by ministers of the 147th clause in the Church Temporalities Bill; and the controversy as to the legality or otherwise of Political Unions, and Chartist organizations; the latter dating their commencement from the subsidence of the Reform agitation, after its immediate object had been attained.

The 147th clause of the Church Temporalities Bill went to provide, that after satisfying all wants and requirements of the Establishment of the State Church, any possible surplus that might

remain of the latter's revenues should be at the disposal of Parliament, for purposes of general education, &c. &c.

The contingency was remote as the poles are asunder ; but *the principle*, namely, the applicability of any portion of State Church-revenue to other than Church purposes, was new ; and to the Dissenting community, and also to the Catholics of the United Kingdom, it was of much value ; as the first faint but decided blow at the old injustice of locking up such heavy sums out of the national resources, for the use and purposes of one communion alone, to the exclusion of all others.

“ Only swallow this little physic,” says the wheedling nurse to the refractory child, “ and see what a nice lump of sugar you shall get afterwards ! ”

“ Only swallow this little Coercion Bill,” said Lord Stanley to the Irish members, and to the liberal Dissenters of the House, “ and see what a beautiful principle of Church-property-appropriation I'll establish for you then ! ” Well—the physic *was* swallowed, *bon gré mal gré*, the Coercion-Bill *was* passed,—not indeed with the

Irish members' good-will and consent; but certainly with that of many of the representatives of the Dissenters. As soon as its passing was secure, Lord Stanley came down to the House, and coolly told his dupes that the sugar should *not* be given—the “appropriation” principle should *not* be enunciated!

The Chartists made a procession up to the Home-Office to present a petition. The gathering, according to the pompous previous announcements, was to be at the least 30,000 “fighting men.” Some alarm was occasioned, and precautions were taken by the Government with a quietness and efficiency that did them credit. Soldiers were under arms, and police distributed in force in every direction; but kept out of sight till the moment they might be wanting. The procession was then allowed to take its course, and a very poor affair it turned out to be, compared with its promises: and the Secretary for the Home Department, the late Lord Melbourne, having very properly refused an interview to petitioners *en masse*, they went back, like the Sultan of Serendib, “as sad as they came.” The preparations against “*accident*” on this occasion were quite as efficient

as those of April last, without any of the rather overdone demonstrations and oddities of special constableness, and the very energetic *bathos* of the police proclamations, to “fright the souls of fearful adversaries!”

The results of the session of 1833 may be summed up in two sentences. A great—indeed a magnificent act of justice was done, which redeemed England entirely and for ever from the hideous guilt of Negro slavery. An additional and a heavy injustice was inflicted upon unfortunate Ireland:—one sad item more added to the long and bitter account that for centuries has been growing up between her and the dominant country. England thus wipes out one black stain from her escutcheon—while striking in another, deeply and darkly.

It was said at the time, and afterwards, that prominent and active as Lord Stanley showed himself in the infliction of this new harshness upon Ireland, the Prime Minister, the late Earl Grey, was equally inveterate and determined.

There seems a fatality over English statesmen in Irish matters. They can be “wise, liberal, just,” (*at times*,) in England: but where Ireland

is concerned, there ever appears an incapacity of counselling, or of acting, save as regards the chance expediency of the hour.

It was said that personal resentments and aversion were not without their effect on Lord Grey's mind, in confirming this indisposition to take a large and generous view of Irish affairs. Certainly the English reformers treated us badly at the period in question, as in the preceding year, and many a year since. But for the Irish M. P.s the success of the English Reform Bill would have been more than doubtful. In requital, the English reformers not only allowed Stanley to insult Ireland with a most limited and mutilated Reform measure, but heartily backed him up in his Coercion Bill.

I speak of the great body of the English reformers, and of several, but by no means of all, of the English reform M. P.s in the house. Of these, as is before recorded, several made a gallant stand with us against Lord Stanley's coercive measure. Let us hope that there will, next session, be a grand reparation made for all injustices and ingritudes; and that Ireland shall have reason to be surprised at the amount of *active* good-will

and generosity, of which she shall find herself the object!

The passing of this Coercion Bill enabled the Government to put down by proclamation every demonstration of popular opinion in Ireland, and gave them several months of respite from agitation, to prove how hollow were their professions of goodwill towards that country, and their protestations, that “but for that same villanous saltpetre” of agitation, they would have done wonders for her.

During a similar interruption of agitation in 1830-31, (under the operation of the act for the suppression of the Catholic Association—an act passed *pari passu* with the Catholic Relief Bill, as a kind of *damper*, to prevent our being too much elated and too grateful,) various devices were resorted to, for the purpose of carrying on the popular movement. Organized bodies with periodical assemblages being totally prohibited, recourse was had to isolated public meetings. The artillery of vice-regal proclamations being brought to bear against them, the ground was shifted again to public dinners. And these in turn becoming untenable, public breakfasts were got up on a large scale, at Home’s Hotel on

Usher's Quay, where, while some made patriotic speeches, the rest of us devoured hot rolls and hot chops, and drank indifferent coffee and well watered tea, with great assiduity and perseverance, for the good of our country.

At one or two of these breakfasts, we were graced by the attendance of Mr. Montgomery Martin, the redoubtable pamphleteer against repeal. He was then, not only an ardent repealer, but something *more*—a *good deal* more than my father at all fancied.

During the proceedings he drew up on his head a red night-cap—as the Phrygian cap, the cap of liberty; and when my father insisted upon its removal, he took it off, only to put it on again when he had changed his place so as not to be seen from the head of the table. But the obnoxious cap was doomed to another and a final eclipse and disaster. The mirth of the gay meeting was rudely broken by a magistrate, who, followed by several policemen, presented himself at the door with the last new proclamation in his hands; and proceeding forthwith to read its contents, called upon all present to disperse. Mr. Martin seemed to consider it as an order to

disappear, for he sunk, cap and all, under the table, and was seen no more !

As another instance of that gentleman's *quondam* devotion to the cause of repeal, which he has since assailed with so much misplaced ability, ingenuity, and dexterity, it may be recorded that in 1832, or 1833, he earnestly solicited Mr. O'Connell's support to a repeal newspaper he proposed to establish in London. Mr. O'Connell told him the attempt was hopeless; the repeal interest being far too weak even to afford a temporary support to an undertaking necessarily so costly. Mr. Martin would not be dissuaded; and Mr. O'Connell finally gave him a subscription, warning him, however, at the same time, that beyond the amount then given he could not go, as he saw not the least chance of success for the project. Mr. Martin persevered; and in three weeks' time finding the loss severe, applied to Mr. O'Connell again, and was very angry to find that the latter reminded him of his previous warning.

About the time of the proclaimed "*breakfasts*," my father was arrested and held to bail on a charge of "*disobeying a proclamation!*" It was at his

own house in Merriion Square that the arrest took place. Farrell, a venerable specimen of the old school of constables, was the party sent for this purpose, accompanied by two *bludgeon men*; as if it had been some coiner, or desperate burglar that was to be laid hold of.

“ Mr. O’Connell, I beg of you,” said poor Farrell, in an imploring tone, “ let us go to the police-office in a coach. I have got the gout, and cannot well walk.”

“ I am very sorry for your gout, Mr. Farrell,” was the reply, “ but since the Lord Lieutenant has chosen to arrest me as if I were a common thief or housebreaker, I think it right the whole city should know it. I must therefore walk.”

We walked accordingly to the police-office, in what I believe is called Henry Street, a little *impasse* by the Royal Exchange. The crowd gathered as we went, till in Dame Street we could scarcely make way through it. The people were greatly excited; and by more than one tall fellow—particularly from among the butchers of the Castle Market, several of whom had their cleavers under their coats,—Mr. O’Connell was assailed with—

“ Ah, Liberator, say the word, only let us *at them!* ”

“ No, no ! ” was his reply ; “ that is not my game. I do not want to lose any of your lives. Depend upon it we shall beat them yet, if you do not put them in the right, by your breaking the law ! ”

And the poor fellows, disappointed, but then and for many a day afterwards, implicitly obedient to him whom they loved more than their own lives, shrunk back behind him, determined at any rate to follow and see out whatever might happen at the police-office.

My father saw plainly that the excitement amongst the people was at a most dangerous height ; and this determined him to consent to give bail—his first intention having been to let himself be sent to prison.

During the formalities at the police office, the Lord Lieutenant's private secretary, a Hanoverian, whose name I at this moment forget, kept continually passing between the office and an inner room, as if taking *bulletins* to some person inside.

“ Come back here, Baron ——,” suddenly said Mr. O'Connell, “ take this message with you to

your master. Tell him, I despise him and the paltry outrage he has committed this day on me in the midst of my family. Say to him, that his miserable acts of petty tyranny only determine us the more to struggle to the last for the restoration of our own parliament, under which, alone, the rights and liberties of Irishmen can be safe!"

Several others were arrested and brought to the police-office about the same time; amongst them, Mr. Reynolds, the present M.P. for Dublin, Mr. Barrett, proprietor of the "Pilot" newspaper, and poor—poor Tom Steele!

While the bail bonds were being made out in the latter's case, he asked permission of the presiding magistrate to speak, as he said, "a few quiet, calm, cool, deliberate words."

"Oh, certainly, Mr. Steele," said the magistrate, a little *taken in* by the gentleness of tone and manner in which the request was made; and which indeed was a characteristic of Tom Steele in all private and social intercourse.

"I thank you, Sir; I thank you much for your great courtesy," replied he, in the same soft tones; then, suddenly changing his manner to all the excitement of his public delivery, and fixing his

eyes fiercely on the unfortunate Hanoverian Baron, who had just "dropped in" once more, he burst out with—"Then, Sir, I denounce the tyrant, Lord Anglesea, and this his most infamous proceeding! I proclaim here, in the face of day, and before the world, that a fouler, a blacker, a more deadly crime against liberty, justice, and right, was never committed by Nero, or any other of the worst monsters of antiquity," &c. &c.

"Well, Tom, you *are* a *very cool* fellow!" was Barrett's quiet remark to him, as, when the storm was spent, he bowed most politely to the astonished officials, and swept out of the place.

CHAPTER IV.

TOM STEELE.—HIS PATRIOTISM, SENSIBILITY, AND DESPONDENCY.—
HIS QUARREL WITH O'CONNELL, AND CHASTISEMENT OF A LONDON
EDITOR.—LORD ANGLESEA—HIS GOVERNMENT.—FEARGUS O'CONNOR.
—SPEECH OF O'CONNELL.—SPRING RICE.—RICHARD SHEIL.—SIR
ROBERT PEEL.—O'CONNOR'S PEDIGREE.

“TOM STEELE” was one of the purest, most single-minded, kind, and chivalrous-souled men that ever breathed. One who long enjoyed and rejoiced in his friendship may now pay him this small and sad tribute, without fearing to be sneered at or contradicted; for, in the melancholy circumstance of the noble-hearted fellow's death, there were proofs most abundantly and most honourably given, by his strongest political opponents, that such was also *their* estimation of him.

Lord Brougham, erratic, unstable, and intemperate as he is, gave a sign of redeeming kindness and generosity, and of unexpected justice of appre-

ciation, by hastening, on the first notice of Steele's danger, to offer a subscription towards the procuring comforts around the dying bed of one who had often most unsparingly assailed him. And this truly honourable example was imitated by others, with whom also Mr. Steele had been at utter variance. He was deeply moved by these demonstrations, and, although refusing pecuniary relief, expressed the warmest gratitude for their intentions. There was one amongst them deserving of special mention, and who *must* be mentioned, notwithstanding that he may not be pleased at having his admirable charity made known. After having vainly attempted to induce Mr. Steele to allow of his placing a very handsome sum for his use in the hands of an attending friend, he did that which he *could* not and would not be denied; namely, he visited, and by every means in his power sought to soothe and comfort the dying man. And he has his best reward in the consciousness that the object of his solicitude felt it deeply, and benefited by it in as much as was then possible. The gentleman to whom I allude is Colonel Perceval, formerly and for several years member for the county of Sligo, and at present

Sergeant-at-Arms to the House of Lords. It is unnecessary to add that his and Mr. Steele's politics differed *toto cælo*.

Such acts as these revive our confidence in our fellow-man, and, for a time at least, relieve the heart of the sad and sickening disgust which gathers about it, at the almost unintermitting bitterness of political life.

In justice to his older friends it must be recorded, that while many from time to time assisted him according to their means, two or three not only did so, but implored of him to come and "wear out the lamp of life" in the quiet and comfort of their country homes, where he could have indulged his high literary tastes, and forgotten the turmoil of politics, from which he had retired with a breaking heart, when his leader and friend, Daniel O'Connell, died. He would not hear of these proposals, and not only refused them, but interfered actively and most determinedly to prevent certain other arrangements, that would have permanently placed him, at any rate, beyond the chance of want.

Allusion has been made to the chivalry of his disposition. It was of the most romantic order.

The only quarrel he ever had with him whom he styled his "Leader, and the Father of his Country," was connected with a love affair, very illustrative of the foregoing remark. Passing through a street of the town of Ennis one day, he stopped and drew back, with the usual courtesy, to allow a young lady, who had just tripped out of her house as he came up, to cross the flagway to a vehicle there waiting for her. She acknowledged his courtesy and proffered assistance with a bow and a sweet smile,—and *thenceforth* Tom Steele loved !

"I have no hope," he said to my father, about a year later ; "I do not know the young lady, and I will not get myself introduced, for I am too poor a man to offer her my hand. But she is the only woman I ever have loved, and ever will love ; and I shall love her till my death."

My father, uneasy at the heavy despondency which he saw growing upon him, endeavoured to reason him out of his predilection ; amongst other matters, suggesting the extreme youth of the lady, &c. as likely to excite ridicule in the public mind, the affair beginning to get generally known. Steele expressed himself hurt at the remonstrance,

and, professing still the warmest feelings of personal attachment, declared that he could no longer act in politics under the guidance of a man who had not understood him, and, it seemed, had not properly appreciated the object of his affections. He retired therefore from the public scene for a time, absolutely and completely.

This temporary estrangement was a bitter pang to Mr. O'Connell, who, after several ineffectual efforts, succeeded, some months afterwards, in getting an interview, and making atonement in a manner that poor Steele never spoke of afterwards without tears in his eyes.

“If my august leader, O'Connell, were to say to me, ‘Steele, place yourself upon that mine; it is about to be sprung, and you will lose your life, but it will be in the cause of Ireland,’ I would do it on the instant!”

Such was a frequent declaration of this devoted man; and those who had opportunities of knowing him, know well that could such an occasion have arisen, he would most assuredly have acted as he said. In private life, and among friends, there was a kindliness, a delicate thoughtfulness, a gentleness, nay, almost a womanly softness, that were

very striking and attractive. But where he conceived that he had just cause of resentment, either on his own account, or that of a friend, the strength and warmth of his emotions made him most fierce and unrelenting.

An unfortunate editor or proprietor of a London paper most grossly assailed him some twenty-five or thirty years ago in one of his leading articles. Steele met him in the street, and irritated at the man's refusal to make any atonement, struck him; warning him at the same time, that the next offence should be far more heavily visited. A few days afterwards there appeared in the same paper a still more grossly unfair and unfounded attack. Steele kept his word, and on their next meeting beat his assailant severely; repeating once more his former warning. Again he was defied; and a third attack, far outrivalling anything that had gone before it in venom and fury, made its appearance. Again a fierce retribution followed, and this time with such determined severity, that it is said the unfortunate newspaper man never recovered its effects.

At a much later period Steele was talking with a friend near the rails of Trinity College, when

an Orange squire from the North, who had been walking with the other party, and who had then for the first time seen Steele, said, by way of a *mauvaise plaisanterie*, in reference to a remark just dropped about my father—"He ought to be hanged!" Steele turned upon the unlucky wight with a fierceness and a storm of passion that fairly daunted him, and made him slink away, glad to escape. But he had miscalculated if he thought to get off so easily. They encountered each other two or three times again within that and the following day, and each time Steele poured in another broadside; until at last the worthy squire thought it wisest to get himself out of ken of his unrelenting assailant, and fly back to his "dirty acres." It would be endless to detail instances of his deep and absorbing affection for my father, and of the ample and abundant return of that affection. A warmer, purer, higher degree of mutual affection never yet was witnessed, or could exist.

The time is at hand when the great question for which both so devotedly laboured, *must* be carried. The affairs of the Empire are coming to a *dead-lock*, owing to the Union-produced misery of

Ireland. It is simply *impossible* that Ireland can go on as a paltry pelting dependency. The equality so much talked of, so long promised, must be given as it can only be given—by re-investing her with the power and privilege of making her own laws. The only other alternative is, that Ireland be made a hunting-field. To such of us as have with them borne “the heats of the day, and the sweats,” the joy of success in Ireland’s cause, will be heavily and sadly damped at not having them to rejoice with in the hour of success. Yet, why should we wish them back in this world of toil and trouble, and constant care and pain?

Lord Anglesea, one of the incidents of whose unlucky second vice-royalty in Ireland is before noted, had, when in Ireland in 1828, and the early part of 1829, conciliated to himself the warm, and indeed the enthusiastic affections of the people. The secret of his success in this respect was simply that he acted according to the dictates of his good and right feeling; and the Irish people, recognising the good-will and kind intention, put, according to their wont, no bounds to their gratitude.

The Tory Government of the day, whose deputy he then was, yielded to the angry remonstrances of the Ascendancy party in Ireland; and recalled him for the crime of having been too popular. The day of his departure was marked by a striking demonstration of public feeling. A very large number of private carriages, and enormous crowds of the people, attended him throughout the seven miles of road from Dublin to Kingstown, with every mark of affection and sorrow.

Even in the midst of their affliction the native humour could not be repressed. As the procession passed through the main street of Kingstown on its way to the harbour, a Dominie Sampson looking personage, wearing a huge pair of goggles, rushed out upon a balcony, and flung his arms towards Lord Anglesea's carriage in quite an agony of grief. "A groan for the *green-eyed monster!*" shouted a fellow in the crowd; and the *Dominie* disappeared back into the house, amid a roar.

Lord Anglesea returned to Ireland two years later, as the Lord Lieutenant of the Whig ministry. Unhappily the Upas influence of Lord Stanley had come over him, as over others of that

ministry; and he returned a changed man. He had thought of the people before, and in so far as in him lay, endeavoured to benefit them; he was now given up to the Ascendancy party; not perhaps wilfully, but blindly, and most decidedly.

That his lordship subsequently regretted the mistakes of his later vice-royalty has been said, and is willingly believed by the Irish. At the time the reflection uppermost in their mind was, that this was but another fresh instance of the folly of putting trust in Englishmen; in short, "that Ireland had never yet trusted, but she was betrayed." It was a pity of him to throw away the love, and in fact devotion to him, of the warm-hearted people of Ireland,—a people the most easily conciliated, the most grateful, and the kindest-natured on the face of the globe. So fast, indeed, was their affection for him, that to this day his name is mentioned kindly; and he has many an humble defender when his later errors are objected to his fame.

They were heavy errors. In the first place there was the outrage upon the Constitution in Ireland—an outrage, in the carrying out of which

he displayed alacrity. In the next place he inflicted a more lasting injury on the people of Ireland by putting on the judicial bench men born and nurtured in hostility to them; and whose minds, perhaps unconsciously to themselves, retained, and on more than one occasion manifested, the strong bias of their early opinions. The magisterial bench was similarly made a greater grievance than ever, in point of unjust exclusion to the richer Catholics and Liberals, and petty, but stinging tyrannies to the poorer. And in every department and action of government the same spirit was allowed to prevail; nay, was even fostered and encouraged. "Were it mine enemy that did this thing, I could have borne it; but thou, even thou, my own familiar friend!"

Such might have been the address of the Irish people to Lord Anglesea, in their grieved astonishment at *his* having been the hand to smite them! The more painful recollections of it, however, are now lost; partly, as I have said, in their belief that that good and gallant nobleman himself, now recognises his mistakes; and partly because of the unfortunately too numerous instances since his time, of the mischievous and disastrous ignorance

and infatuation of English officials generally, in dealing with Irish affairs.

The Session of 1834 opened for us with a serious difference among the Repeal members. Feargus O'Connor could no longer stomach his being considered as playing *second fiddle* to O'Connell. He aspired to the *first* part; but neither then nor since, has he succeeded in producing anything but discord. He announced publicly that he would not allow the testing of the Repeal question in Parliament to be much longer delayed; that it was trifling with the people of both countries, and with the great question itself, to have it postponed; and that if no one else would "bell-the-cat," he would make a motion on the subject in the new Session. Of course his *firmness* met exceeding approval from the enemy.

In vain my father remonstrated. In vain he asked him to consider that the question was yet new to the public mind; and that even the popular strength in Ireland was as yet by no means so organized and arrayed in its favour, as so great a question, so important a proposal of change would require. The unthinking and the jealous got up a cry in Ireland in support of Feargus O'Connor's

specious patriotism; and sorely against his will, and with very uncomfortable forebodings, the originator of the Repeal movement had to yield, and give notice for an early day of subjecting it to a parliamentary discussion.

About 5 P.M. on Tuesday, the 16th of April, 1834, Mr. O'Connell began. He spoke for nearly six hours: at first amid petulant interruptions, and subsequently amid an affectation of scornful indifference to him, his cause, and his arguments. He expected all this; and therefore was not in any way disconcerted.

The plan of his speech embraced in the first place a review of the constitutional history of Ireland;—her rightful position as a member of the Empire, with the incidents to that position, and chief among them, her entire right to make her own laws and manage her own affairs;—the continued invasions and outrages committed by English Governors upon those rights, &c. &c. Then came a description of the tortuous, and at last, the reckless and shameless policy by which she was robbed of all her rights, and reduced to her present condition of a miserable mendicant province. And then statements in detail of the specific injuries

that have resulted to Ireland—comparisons of her progress under a system of unshackled native legislation; and under the legislation of the English Parliament—expositions of growing, and predictions of future evils, the logical consequences of the giant evil, injustice and misery inflicted upon her by the taking away of her own parliament; and finally, a suggestion of the outlines of a very practicable arrangement between the two countries, which should ensure to each the full measure of their natural liberties, and draw the bonds of the connexion closer than ever, by removing all causes of bitterness, closing up all sources of mutual injustice, and restoring the dependent country to those rights, the full enjoyment and exercise of which would make her a powerful and valuable auxiliary to England in the hour of adversity; and not as now, a reproach, a weakness, and a danger.

It is not for me to praise this speech; and were I to do so, it might only awaken again the cavils and misrepresentations of those whose preconceived opinions and prejudices were disturbed and irritated by the power of its arguments.

But if there might be a reasonable expectation

that an Englishman would be induced to exert himself so far in an *Irish* matter as to put such control upon those two passions, (among the strongest of our nature,) which a long course of national prosperity has so fostered and strengthened in his soul,—the love of power, and pride of domination,—as to give a calm and candid consideration to the arguments in favour of a restoration to Ireland of her ancient and indisputable right to legislate for herself, his attention might confidently be asked and given to the speech of Mr. O'Connell, of which we have just spoken, as the best and most sufficient and entire statement of our case: notwithstanding that it was made at so early a period of the agitation for Repeal; and notwithstanding all that has been said and written on that subject in the fourteen long years that have since elapsed. And yet this was a speech very little in favour with himself, either then, or on a subsequent review.

It will surprise many who have only thought of Mr. O'Connell as the rough, fierce and reckless agitator that hostile interests and passions have depicted him, to be told that he was one of the most sensitive and nervous men that ever lived.

Previous to his motion he was very unhappy, and spent several sleepless nights: which was by no means unusual with him when any matter of importance impended.

He was divided between two opinions:—his own, which inclined him to treat his subject mainly, if not altogether upon large and general grounds, and with reference to great and statesmanlike principles of international polity; and the recommendations of others, who, knowing the horror of theory, and the inveterate fancy for what are called practical and *business-like* considerations, which mark the House of Commons, wished him to deal largely in statistics; and, in fact, to incur the danger of *overlaying* the subject with figures and details; and thereby of fatiguing an auditory already quite unfavourable enough.

The great point, however, on which he felt annoyed and dispirited, was the premature forcing on of the question. The necessary rally and concentration of popular opinion in Ireland, without which it was not reasonable to expect attention in the English Parliament, had not had time to be effected. And the Irish members generally, new to their position as members of parliament,

were not prepared to bear, upon so short a notice, the part they might otherwise have done, in so momentous a debate. Spring Rice,—at present, (and greatly in consequence of the part he then took) Viscount Monteagle, commenced and occupied the business hours of the next day's sitting of Parliament with his reply.

Like all oppressed and dependent countries, Ireland is constantly doomed to see amongst the readiest advocates and vindicators of the injustices inflicted upon her, some of her own children. In the olden time the English "Lord Deputies," or Lord Lieutenants of those days, received no Irishman to mercy, unless he had first *done service* upon some of his own countrymen: that is to say, betrayed, or assassinated some ancient comrade or leader.

In these gentler modern times, which Carlyle so rebukes for savouring of *rose-water*, the *actual* dagger is laid aside; but the betrayal, and the *metaphorical* dagger of misrepresentation and abuse, are as much in favour as ever; and as strictly required from the Irish janissary, ere his English masters will recognise and reward him. The Spartan did not more laugh at the contor-

tions of his drunken helot;—the Irish exterminating landlord and magistrate, did not more chuckle over the murderous faction-fights of the unhappy peasantry around him, than do the English enjoy the gladiatorial contests between Irish members in the House of Commons!

I need not give a detailed opinion upon Lord Monteagle's speech. The judgment of an ardent repealer must inevitably be suspected in such a matter. Yet, as opinion, whatever value may attach to it, should at any rate be free, I say, frankly, that we considered his lordship's speech to have been a clever, special pleading, elaborate and elaborately disingenuous dissertation upon all things else save the real merits of the question. He was cheered, of course; and cheered to the echo: for was he not *doing service* upon Ireland and brother Irishmen? But to the same test of cool, calm, candid consideration, and examination, to which I would willingly submit the opening speech of the debate, let but the answer of Lord Monteagle be subjected; and *we*, at least, will not fear the result.

The debate dragged a weary and a languishing length, over eight or nine days. With the excep-

tion of the two first speakers, no one on either side was properly *up* to the subject. Emerson Tennant quoted as an argument against the constitutional repeal of an act of parliament in these countries, the results of the violent *total* international separation of Holland and Belgium; and had to misquote and misrepresent even *then*: for even then, Belgian commerce and general prosperity were progressing, although, naturally enough, they had not attained to their present high condition.

Feergus O'Connor made what would be called in Ireland a "rollicking" rattling off-hand sort of speech, in his ordinary fashion: "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." His relative, O'Neill Daunt, M.P. for Mallow, made an able, sensible, and temperate speech. In his case it was particularly to be regretted that the discussion was so premature, as he has since displayed a still greater ability, power of argument, and extent of information.

Richard Sheil made a clever, (it is a pity to use such a word to such a man,) pungent, effective speech; not quite equal to his reputation; nor to that which *he will yet make* in support

of the great and only measure that can save Ireland and strengthen the empire—*the Repeal!* I shall have to speak of him again, with reference to the exciting debates of the succeeding Parliament.

It is needless to call the roll of the other speakers. Even Peel failed to interest; but for an obvious reason. The debate had been so feebly sustained, that there was no occasion to depart from the usual English policy of appearing to consider the “Repeal” a question too wild for argument. He caused, however, considerable amusement by reading from some old record of barbarous times, the ceremonial of a kingly election in Ireland; where the successful candidate had to bathe in *broth* and afterwards to drink up his own bath—a ceremonial from which it of course cannot be considered otherwise than a very natural and obvious supposition that we derive the popular phrase so common in parts of Ireland, of *a broth of a boy!*”

Sir Robert Peel applied the description to Feargus O'Connor; as the latter might be expected to find himself, were the ancient Irish monarchy, or *monarchies*, dating from the time

of the Christian era, to be restored and consolidated in his august person. Sir Robert Peel, however, was doubtless in ignorance, that Ireland has no right to lay claim to the ancestry of the honourable member for Nottingham. He owes the distinguished honour of his nativity to the circumstance of the coming over from England, and settling in her southern province, of his grandfather; or, peradventure, his great-grandfather, a stout, shrewd and active Essex man, of the name of Conyers. He had speedily become the possessor of a good estate in the county Cork, that had slipped through the fingers of some spendthrift, whose family dated in Ireland perhaps from a century before: when its then representative had followed the fortunes of Cromwell's lieutenants in the South, as a "thorough godly" trooper, or a "chosen vessel" of a drummer; and profited accordingly, on the native Irish being robbed of their lands.

The strange *Sassenach* name of Conyers was ere very long transformed by the Celtic tongues of his new neighbours into Connors, and thence into Connor. After the latter change, and when the penal laws had ceased to render the

Milesian prefix of " O " or " Mac " an abomination in the eyes of the " English garrison," the transition was easy to the aristocratic and once princely title of O'Connor; in which the descendants of the worthy Essex immigrant or colonist, at present delight. England, therefore, in adopting the present most notable bearer of this transmuted name, is but reclaiming her own; and in so far as the future may be judged of from the present and the past, there does not appear to be any very great reason to apprehend that the sister country will be moved by any jealousy or churlishness to resist or dispute the claim.

CHAPTER V.

MR. O'CONNELL'S MOTION, AND REPLY—ITS EFFECTS.—THE DIVISION.
—MR. KENNEDY.—LORD ALTHORP.—AN ELECTIONEERING EXPEDITION.—EBENEZER JACOB—HIS SPEECH.—A PARLIAMENTARY CANVASS.—MR. JACOB'S RETURN, BY O'CONNOR'S AGENCY.—DUNGARVON FREEHOLDERS.—DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE AND FEARGUS O'CONNOR.—THE REPEAL DEBATE.—WEAKNESS OF THE MINISTRY.—THE COERCION ACT.—EARL GREY'S RESIGNATION.

UPON the ninth night of the debate upon Mr O'Connell's motion, he stood up to speak in reply. Sailors would have said that it was "high water on a spring tide" in the House. Not only the body of the House, but the members' galleries were filled to overflowing; and the strangers' gallery, and seats under the gallery, were similarly crowded. In short, the largest assemblage that the old chapel of St. Stephen was capable of containing had come together, to "see execution done" on *Repeal*.

The debate had *not* been maintained as a debate upon such a question should have been. In par-

ticular, it had not been maintained, as such a debate should have been, to make an impression upon so hostile an auditory. There was therefore no moral check to counterbalance the advantage of a numerical superiority so utterly overwhelming, and the exultation was therefore without alloy and without restraint.

Mr. O'Connell had to vindicate his subject, answer the attacks, and correct the misrepresentations of his multitudinous assailants, and cover the retreat of his discomfited party. And to do this, in the face of an overpowering majority, whose personal and political aversion to him was flushed and excited to such a degree by the circumstances of the debate, that it was with difficulty their own bear-leaders could get them to allow him to speak without interruption.

He did not intrude upon their scanty patience for more than three-quarters of an hour, and in that brief space accomplished fully the three objects before specified. Of the tone and temper of either that or his opening address, the most captious could not complain. It is true that he had to make sharp and severe allusions to one or two of his assailants; but the manner in which

they had attacked him most evidently justified and necessitated the severity in those particular cases ; while the rest of his remarks rather erred on the side of too great forbearance.

There were three main points to which he invited the consideration, not only of men and ministers in that House, but of every friend to the welfare of the Empire without or within its walls.

1st. That however great the majority by which this motion was defeated, there was nothing of the wisdom of statesmen in trusting to that alone, without determining to investigate immediately into the sources and origin of the great and growing wretchedness of Ireland, which had been the most effective agent in raising and sustaining the cry for the Repeal of the Union.

2d. That no promise of any distinct, specific, and practical measure of relief to any one of the grievances of Ireland had been held out by the ministry, or any of their supporters, when declaring their resolution not to give toleration to the great demand of the Irish people for the restoration of their own parliament.

3d. That the ministry and the House, being now about to reject that demand by so triumphant

and crushing a majority, ought to follow up at once their advantage, and complete the defeat of the *agitators*, by giving practical proof to the people of Ireland, that an English ministry and an English Parliament *were* their friends, and *would* relieve their wants, and promptly and permanently ameliorate their condition.

The effect of his speech was such, that it not only won him some cheers even from his opponents, particularly where he reminded them of the necessity of their doing something more to beat the *agitators* than merely recording a large majority against them, but induced the ministerialists actually to *restrain* the vehemence of the cheers with which the result of the division was announced. An intimation to that effect was actually sent down from the Treasury benches, and a very general cry of *Hush* enforced the obedience of some of the *dii minores*, who were inclined to be particularly noisy. The numbers were—

For Repeal 38

Against it 523

Majority 485

with two tellers in each case.

The only member not an Irishman, nor representing an Irish constituency, who voted in the minority, was Mr. Kennedy, then M.P. for Tiverton, and since—but not exactly in consequence of his vote—a judge of the Mixed Court in the West Indies, for adjudicating on cases of captured slave-vessels. This gentleman, in the next Session, (that of 1835, the first of the second reformed Parliament,) vacated his seat in favour of Lord Palmerston, and *subsequently* got the situation in question. Whether *post hoc* was *propter hoc* in this case, I will not say; it is enough to have stated a more proximate and more probable cause than his vote for Repeal—for which vote he made a species of public apology, when his appointment was publicly assailed on that account.

It was, as I recollect, during this debate that Lord Althorp made the rational and proper declaration, that if the majority of all classes of the Irish nation demanded the “Repeal,” it should not and could not be denied.

There have been many and strange attempts—the strangest of all by an Irish judge in one of the recent trials—to deny that he made such a declaration. The fact has been and can be attested by

plenty of witnesses. As one, I affirm it positively; and have much better reason to know it than the learned Judge, who did not sit in that Parliament at all, being then, as now, upon the Bench.

There ought to be no contest, and ought not to have been any wonder made about it. It was a plain, straightforward, rational, and manly declaration, entirely consistent, as regards those qualities, with the words and acts generally of *honest Lord Althorp*.

Such was, indeed, the designation of the late Lord Spencer, while in the Lower House, and one as well merited as party interests could at all allow in a minister. He was an indifferent speaker, hesitating and unimpressive. His nobility and wealth, however, stood him in good stead, as *always* happens in the House of Commons, and his plain good sense in still better, as *not unfrequently* happens in the same locality. On the whole, there was a "respectability" about him, that made his virtual secession from politics after 1834 a decided loss to his party.

In the summer of 1834, I accompanied, and indeed formed a part of, an *electioneering* expedition to Ireland.

On the death of Mr. Lamb, M.P. for Dungarvon, a Repealer had been returned in the person of Mr. Ebenezer Jacob, of the county Wexford. His return was petitioned against; and after a sharp and bitter contest before the Committee, with success, in so far as unseating him. A new election being ordered, the expedition in question was organized in a council of the Repeal M.P.s in London, and set forth with the following *dramatis personæ*:—

Ebenezer Jacob, candidate;

Feergus O'Connor, political godfather, speech-maker, canvasser, &c. &c.;

John O'Connell, *nominis umbra*, to represent his father.

Our journey to Bristol was enlivened by the sweeping denunciations and maledictions which our candidate heaped plentifully upon the heads of those who, by their swearing, had ousted him from his seat; and by Feergus' confident assurances that, what between his own oratory and his legal knowledge, the new election should not only be successful, but unimpeachable.

A rough and tedious passage brought us to Waterford, where, as we were closing the quay,

I had the merit of restoring the sea-sick and half-dead Feergus to life and to his powers of speech-making, by prescribing a tumbler of hot brandy punch. This worked so miraculous a cure, that in ten minutes afterwards he was in the balcony of one of the hotels, giving full and most energetic vent to his patriotic eloquence, even to the splitting of the ears of the groundlings!

The speech of the Repeal candidate, on the nomination day at Dungarvon, was certainly not to be blamed for too great mildness and softness. Mr. Jacob had been in the navy in early life, and brought away with him a little of the *plain speaking* of the quarter-deck,—at least of the quarter-deck of former times. “Mr. High-Sheriff,” he began, as soon as he had secured the most conspicuous and commanding position in the court, by mounting on the sheriff’s desk, with his heels absolutely close to the nose of that respected functionary: “Mr. High-Sheriff, and Electors of Dungarvon, I have come to you again to be elected, having been deprived of my seat by a base conspiracy! Look at that perjured miscreant!” (pointing at a person in the gallery who had been a witness against him.) “See, the

scoundrel, how he crouches there, ashamed, yet glorying in his villany!"

Here there was a burst of interruptions, and calls upon the sheriff to stop him. The bewildered functionary, thus adjured, made an attempt to do so, but nearly had his wand broken across his head.

"I am not to be stopped—I shan't be stopped by you, Mr. Sheriff, or any other man. *I respect you, Sir*, but I will not allow you to stop me! (cries of Order, order!) Who is it that *dares* to call me to order? J——! (naming another of his assailants,)—stand forth, J——! in all your insignificance and baseness! stand forth, till I expose you to the world!"

Here a young relative of the individual thus courteously addressed thought to make a protest and stop him, but was silenced with, "Sit down, Sir! *you* have no business to interrupt me! I am not speaking of you, Sir; I don't know you, Sir, and I don't care to know! I am speaking of scoundrels, and villains, and perjurers; such as that man, and that man, and that man!" &c. &c.

I waited to hear no more; but squeezed my way out of the court, rather more than satisfied

with as much of our candidate's powers as I had witnessed.

The only parallel that I recollect to this gentle mode of courting a constituency's "most sweet voices," occurred at a county election in the West of Ireland some months later. The candidate had asked a friend of his, a gentleman resident and well known, (and I will add, greatly liked,) in the part of the county which the candidate was going to visit, to accompany him on a ride to visit and canvass the farmer voters. They drew up their horses at the door of one farm-house, where stood, in all the glory of his electoral privilege, a stout and sturdy yeoman, waiting to be wooed. The candidate, with all the deferential urbanity *de rigueur* on such occasions, raised his hat, and respectfully expressed his hope that he might have the honour of Mr. ——'s vote and support at the next election.

"Oh! well, Mr. F——, I am sure I respect you and your family, Sir, very much; but before I promise my vote, I'd like to hear, Sir, what are your *prenciples*?" [*principles.*]

Mr. F—— was about to answer, as in duty and interest bound, and with undiminished urbanity,

when his canvassing friend and *aide-de-camp* pulled him back, and *craning* over the neck of his horse, opened a broadside on the astonished farmer.

“His *principles*! Mr. F——’s principles! *You* ask a gentleman like Mr. F—— his principles! Get along with you! A pretty pass things are come to, when Mr. F—— must stop on the road to tell you his principles! Come away, F——, pitch the fellow, and his vote, and his principles, to the d—— together, and don’t be losing your time!”

“Oh! my dear ——,” said the candidate, as soon as he got breath again, after the double effects of laughter, and the smart canter into which his indignant *aide-de-camp* had forced the horses, “you’re an excellent fellow, and I am much obliged for your offer to assist me; but unless you want me to lose my election, never more be *canvasser* of mine!”

In justice to Mr. Jacob it must be stated that he had experienced a very great virulence, bitterness, and personal unfairness of opposition and attack; and had been put to most serious expense nearly single-handed to vindicate the choice of the constituency against the heterogeneous but very formidable coalition that had been entered into

against him by the Tories and Whigs of the neighbourhood ; aided by all the influence, such as it was, of a Catholic family, one of whose numerous scions was the opposing and government candidate. The Whig party were furious with him because he dared to dispute what they seemed to consider the prescriptive right of the Duke of Devonshire to do as he liked with the borough of Dungarvon. The *family* arrayed against him had expected to get their man in under his Grace's wing, and thus get a hold upon some of the patronage of the county. But the deadliest inveteracy of all was on the part of the local Tories. A Protestant himself, and of Orange lineage, the Orangemen of the county looked upon him as a deserter, and stopped at nothing to defeat and annoy him, because he had boldly and thoroughly identified himself with the cause of the people.

Feargus O'Connor effected his return for him against the whole efforts of this powerful combination. This election was not then, and has not been the solitary instance by many, that has since occurred, of the preference which the Catholic people of Ireland give to a candidate, no matter how opposed to them in religion and previous

sentiments, where he has declared for the nationality of Ireland. In this, as in many other instances, they promptly rejected for such a man, a co-religionist of their own, and a gentleman of great local respectability, and otherwise entirely unexceptionable. The alliance with an English party, and the refusal to vote for Repeal, were the fatal objections to him.

I have said that Feargus O'Connor carried the election. He did so by his energy, activity, and rough and ready oratory. He was everywhere and everything;—speechifier, canvasser, lawyer, *gutter-agent*, mob-leader, &c. &c., and sorely puzzled his opponents by his eccentric departures from the old-established routine of electioneering.

Borough elections in Ireland at that time, and indeed until the year 1846, could be extended over six days—that is to say, one nomination day, and five *clear* polling days; or four, if there had been any polling on the nomination day,—and either party having the power to avail themselves of the extended term, it rarely happened that a contested election was concluded before the evening of the sixth day. In 1846 Mr. Macarthy, then M.P. for Cork city, intro-

duced, and succeeded in passing a measure which has restricted them to two days. Of course the extended term gave large opportunities for electioneering practices, and devices of all kinds; and those opportunities were very largely used by both of the "high *contesting* parties" at Dungarvon in 1834. On the morning of the fourth day, when Mr. Jacob's opponents seemed fairly to have exhausted their quiver, and were nearly reduced to a confession of defeat, a sudden piece of intelligence came to revive their spirits, and give them a new hope of success.

The forty-shilling freeholders of Ireland were disfranchised, some immediately, and others prospectively, by a penal act against them, passed at the same time as the Catholic Relief Act of 1829, with a view, no doubt, of preventing the Irish from being too joyful and too grateful on that occasion. In Dungarvon there were a large number of these freeholders, whose tenure and vote hung upon a single life. 'This "life" suddenly determined during the election, and the men who had gone to bed "free and independent electors," got up next morning disfranchised, and no longer of value to either party. This was

a heavy blow to us; for not only did we lose their help—the greater number of them having given promises to Mr. Jacob, but the remainder of the diminished constituency began at once to give unmistakeable symptoms that they now considered themselves too few in number to incur, and bear alone the weight of the Duke of Devonshire's displeasure, or rather that of his agent, the late Colonel Curry.

All was dismay then on our side, and corresponding exultation amongst the “happy family” of the combined Whig, Tory, and Papist Anti-Repealers; when suddenly, on the hustings in the main square of the town, appeared Feargus O'Connor, *tanquam Deus ex machinâ*, to dissipate all our difficulties, and set everything right again.

He loudly invited general attention, from enemies as well as friends, to the contents of a letter, which he held in his hands; and which ran much as follows, as my recollection serves me:—

“ *Lismore Castle, June 1834.*

“ SIR,

“ In answer to your inquiry, I beg to state that according to the latest instructions I have

received from the Duke of Devonshire, his Grace's Dungarvon tenants have his entire assent to the fullest and freest exercise of their voting privilege. Although himself opposed to the Repeal question, the duke would consider it most unconstitutional and improper to interfere in any way with those who hold under him, as to their votes on this or any other occasion. You are therefore at perfect liberty, and have my warranty to say, that none of his tenants shall be punished, or made to suffer for supporting the Repeal candidate at this election.

“ I have the honour to be, Sir,

&c. &c. &c.

“ To FEARGUS O'CONNOR, Esq. M.P.”

In the extremity of their astonishment at this unexpected manifesto, friends and foes called upon Mr. O'Connor to read it two or three times over. The effect was electrical—the deserters were stopped, the doubting were confirmed, the willing were cheered on. In the excitement and enthusiasm of the moment, there was *a rush* to the poll; half to gratify the common anxiety to support the Repealer, and half to make sure of the

votes before any change of mind on the part of his Grace should be made known, if change there were. By four in the afternoon the die was cast. It was generally known that so many had polled on the Repeal side, that the election was virtually won; and that even, although the scanty remnant of the constituency were, without exception, to go upon the other side, Mr. Jacob's return was inevitable.

Another piece of intelligence was also spread, about the same hour. It was announced that Colonel Curry, agent to the Duke of Devonshire, had suddenly come into town—

“ Bloody with spurring—fiery red with haste !”—

in a perfect storm of fury against a forgery which he had been informed had occurred of his name to a pretended letter from him, authorizing his principal's tenants to vote according to their consciences. He indignantly denied that he ever had got, and therefore denied that he ever had transmitted, any such permission from his grace the Duke of Devonshire; and he sent a most indignant summons to Mr. Feargus O'Connor to deliver up the letter at once, or stand charged with the forgery.

The summons was most promptly and immediately complied with by Mr. O'Connor; when it turned out that so great had been the astonishment of friend and foe at the contents of *the body* of the letter in the morning, that they had *forgotten to ask for the name written at the bottom of it*; which was *not* that of the representative or any subordinate of the House of Cavendish, but one of a much more extensive family, inasmuch as the name was *Ebenezer Humbug*.

The Repeal debate of this session having ended with a pledge of good will and fair intentions towards Ireland—a pledge which, however vague in terms, yet was unmistakeable in its general purport, and as such, was deliberately and solemnly entered into by the three estates of the realm: by the Commons, with whom it originated in Spring Rice's amendment to the "Repeal" motion—by the Lords, who passed a substantive resolution of the same tenor—and by the King, who received and approved a joint address, embodying their common sentiments and declarations; Mr. O'Connell resolved upon testing the validity of this pledge, and the sincerity of those who were parties to it. He resolved

at all hazards of his popularity in Ireland, to suspend the Repeal agitation for a term long enough to give a fair trial to the benevolence so loudly vaunted, and so imposingly proclaimed. His experiment had an ill-omened beginning, in an occurrence which led to a scene of excitement in the House of Commons, much beyond anything that I had witnessed there before, excited as our debates upon the Coercion Bill had been.

Lord John Russell, to use Lord Stanley's phrase at the time, had *upset the coach* of the Reform ministry, about the end of May, by a declaration of the urgent necessity of Church Reform. The *coach* righted itself by getting rid of Stanley and Sir James Graham; and the common expectation was, that thus lightened, it would bowl along with renovated speed, upon the road to further political ameliorations. An immediate advance was to be made towards the conciliation of Ireland. Lord Grey himself, disposed as he was to be severe towards her, consented that in the approaching renewal of the Coercion Bill, the clause should be omitted which substituted Courts-martial for the ordinary tribunals. But he would not yield to the repre-

sentations of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, the late respected Marquis of Wellesley, as to the propriety of giving up also the clauses restrictive of the right of public meetings.

The rest of the cabinet—Lord Stanley, that “arch-artificer” of mischief, being no longer amongst them,—were indisposed to continue this wanton and wholly unjustifiable outrage upon the sister country; and common prudence dictated that it would be well to conciliate the Irish representatives, now that the large and sweeping majorities which the Whigs had at their command at the outset of the Reform Parliament were found to be rapidly diminishing; partly in consequence of the disgust and disappointment their inactivity and retrograde tendencies had given to the more liberal of their supporters; and partly by the almost unvarying fact, that the numerous vacancies caused by successful petition, or otherwise, were filled up by Tories.

In this altered view and condition of matters, Mr. O’Connell was communicated with, and informed that the more obnoxious clauses of the Coercion Act should not be pressed; and his forbearance towards the staggering Government

was invited. Such at least was the impression upon his mind from the communication made to him; and he having nearly two months before resolved, and announced that he would suspend the Repeal agitation, for a time long enough to test the pledges of the Parliament and Sovereign before alluded to, did not hesitate to meet the conciliatory overtures even more than half-way: by withdrawing the Repeal opposition to a Whig candidate at a pending election for the county of Wexford; and by refraining from taking the hostile course he had determined upon in a debate upon some of the ramifications of the Church question.

However it came about, or on whom the fault is chargeable, certain it is, that the word of promise, if kept to the ear, was broken to his hope; the Coercion Act Renewal being moved in the Lords, with quite an illusory abatement of the objectionable parts.

Thence arose that scene of fierce controversy and violent personal contradictions between him and the then Secretary for Ireland, the present Lord Hatherton, which startled the House out of the scanty propriety that it ever had in dealing

with Irish matters. The partizans of both the combatants cheered lustily: our Irish lungs, (for after all there is no one who knows *how* to cheer but an Irishman,) enabling us to make up in noise what we wanted in numbers.

Poor Lord Althorp fidgetted on his seat as if it had suddenly become red hot. At one moment he bent over and whispered Mr. Littleton; at another, he started nearly to his legs, and then sat down again, struck by the hopelessness of the *mess* into which differences of opinion and vacillation had brought the cabinet. All the other occupants of the Treasury bench whispered, and consulted, and jumped about in much the same fashion, and much the same confusion. Stanley and Graham, sitting aloof, looked down upon their late colleagues in huge enjoyment of their difficulties, and “grinned horribly a ghastly smile,” while our *Irish cry* waxed stronger and bolder every minute, and was chimed in with by the more practised cheers of the Tory party, exulting in the discomfiture and exposure that had taken place, and glad of “*any stick* to beat the dog” of whiggery, so lately wagging its tail in triumph over themselves.

Into the particular merits of this distressing, and yet in its results not unhappy controversy, I do not wish to enter, particularly as the surviving principal is worthy of every respect. Those who would have any interest in examining into it, can read the debates of the time, and form their own opinion. I do not wish to say a word in such a case that might savour of natural bias, and shall therefore leave the subject, with the single additional remark, that my father, convinced as he was that his impressions of the communications made to him were correct, ever regretted that it was his misfortune to be obliged thus to come into angry collision with one whom he respected and esteemed.

The results were not by any means unhappy. The split in the cabinet being now patent in all its magnitude and *irreconcilability*, and the fact also being proclaimed that the nobleman directly charged with the government of Ireland had distinctly advised the mitigations to which Lord Grey was opposed, the latter resigned. Feeble and broken he appeared in spirits and in health, as he rose in the House of Lords on Monday, an evening in the second week of July, 1834,

to announce and explain his resignation. While the Irish M.P.s, among others, were crowding pell-mell into the inconvenient *sheep-pen* which the scanty courtesy of the Upper House assigns to the members of the Lower who wish to attend its debates, it would have been natural, and most excusable, if the thoughts and feelings uppermost in their minds had been those of gratified and exulting revenge. We were about to witness the acknowledgment of defeat on an Irish question, and in an attempt to inflict fresh insult upon Ireland, of the man who had recanted and acted against all his early opinions upon Irish matters; and the leader and prime mover of a cabinet which, after accepting the important assistance of the Irish representatives to carry the great question of Reform for England, and secure that cabinet itself in power, had ungratefully turned round upon their auxiliaries, and not only denied all but a most limited and inefficient measure of Reform for Ireland, but used its first strength and first majorities in a reformed Parliament to assail us in the most important of our few remaining constitutional rights.

No doubt there was much of this upon our

minds. We should have been less than *men*—and far less than *Irishmen*—not to have exulted at the baffling of the new attempt at oppression of our country, and at the defeat and overthrow of the leader of her assailants. But there was yet another and a more generous feeling—that of sincere regret that Charles Grey, in his earlier career the friend and advocate of the people, and of the rights and liberties of the people, should so have forgotten his former self—so have recanted, *practically*, if not in words, his former principles, and so have let himself be made the tool of the strange and scarcely sane inveteracy of hostility to Ireland of one man, who seemed to have only joined his cabinet to disturb, distract, and pervert its councils, and then to abandon it in its hour of need.

Such should *not* have been the closing scene of the political life of Charles Grey, whose name was once so bright a beacon of hope to the oppressed! And with this regret for him was mixed up in our minds the still bitterer feeling, yet rankling deeply and darkly—that Irish rights and Irish liberties were, to the leading statesmen of England, of little interest or value;

not to be weighed or considered for a moment in comparison with what appeared the passing interest or inclination of the English mind, and only to be regarded when they could be made subservient to a party purpose, and a party advantage.

CHAPTER VI.

CHANGE OF ADMINISTRATION.—DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT.—THE OLD HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT CONSUMED BY FIRE — PROPOSAL FOR CHANGE OF SITE.—PROBABLE CONSTITUTION OF THE NEW PARLIAMENT—BETS THEREON.—MEMBERS BEGIN TO ASSEMBLE. — ELECTION OF SPEAKER.—THE PRETENDED COMPACT.—MR. ABERCROMBIE.—THE KING'S SPEECH.—THE ADDRESS—ITS PRESENTATION.

LORD MELBOURNE, whose death has just been announced in the papers, (December, 1848,) succeeded to the Premiership in the same month, July, 1834. There were some trifling re-casts of the characters in the ministerial list; and there was, for the first time, a kindliness shown and *promised* towards Ireland.

The events of the autumn belong to history, and not to this humble record of mine. The news of the wholesale ejection by William IV. of the Reform ministry, on the queer pretext of Lord Spencer's death, struck Ireland with dismay. Great was the exultation of all Orange land

therefor! The “*Saturnia regna*” seemed restored for them; and they seemed inclined to make them the “*Saturnalia regna*.” In the theatre at Dublin the Orangemen waved their party-flag unchecked and unrepudiated over the head of the representative of royalty, the Earl of Haddington. The more noisy and *knowing* of the Anti-Popish junior Fellows of Trinity College, in the same city, increased mightily their Orange students; and gave them *suppers*, in two senses *hotter* than ever! And in every county and barony throughout Ireland, the petty Orange functionaries took new courage in the everyday detail of annoyance, and teasing persecution of their poorer Papist neighbours. Indeed, throughout the three countries the winter wore on with the most extravagant exultations and anticipations on the part of the Tory, or as Sir Robert Peel at this time re-christened them, greatly to the disgust of poor old Lord Eldon, the *Conservative* party.

Notwithstanding the warnings of his cool and practised judgment, that *the pear was not yet ripe*,—that the Court intrigue was premature, by which the failing mind of the king had been so practised upon as to cause him to dismiss with

downright ignominy the Reform ministry, with whose proclaimed principles he had so identified himself in 1831, and that therefore extreme prudence and circumspection should be exercised until the new ministry should feel the ground firmer under their feet,—the cupidities and small ambitions of Sir Robert Peel's supporters made them utterly intolerant of delay, and he had to dissolve Parliament, and try the doubtful chances of a general election.

From this period,—the autumn and early winter of 1834,—commenced that moral winter of hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness, which for full seven years or more froze up all kindly, manly, honourable feeling among political parties, and made those years the most unpleasant and bitter to experience at the time, as to remembrance now, that are on the record of modern parliamentary history. I am confident that in so describing them there is no more said than what politicians of all parties, who went through that time of inveterate squabbling, would heartily subscribe to. Individuals, and individual parties, will add to the description as most accords with their impression of the consequences to themselves. Under, per-

haps, a bias of this description, I would add, that it were well for the good fame of England that much of what occurred during the next seven years in her internal, and, as regards Ireland, *international* history, were sunk in oblivion. Bigotry and intolerance were rampant; incited and fooled to the top of their bent by interested knavery and reckless ambition.

It was during the recess of 1834-1835 that the old Houses of Parliament were burned. The common-sense motion of Mr. Hume, to provide a more commodious place of assemblage, at least for the Commons, had been negatived but a few months before; and, as the crowd remarked during the fire, that motion was then carried "without a division."

His object, however, was but partially carried after all, as the fire could not altogether destroy and swallow up the *site* of the ancient palace of Westminster, as it did the buildings, ancient and modern, or modernized, which were upon that site. A most abominable smell from that *cloaca maxima* of London and Westminster, the Thames, used to be perceptible whenever the windows of the old Houses were opened; and

although we are for the present a little less afflicted by this nuisance, in consequence of being shut out in the temporary House and library from the river by the interposition of two courts of the new buildings, with their lofty surrounding constructions, yet, when at length (if ever) we are to remove to the latter, the health-destroying nuisance will be renewed. Mr. Hume and others were urgent for a removal to the site of the unhappy edifice called the National Gallery, in Trafalgar Square; but the majority of the House were of opinion that “*les souvenirs valaient mieux que la santé!*” and so we are doomed to remain within the sphere of the incense-breathing Thames.

The old House of Commons had great interest about it. No doubt it was inconvenient, and scant of accommodation, but the present House has very little advantage over it in that or any other regard: and the House that we are told we shall get into at some remote future time in the new building, will re-produce, if some reports speak true, several of the faults of St. Stephen's; while all the great recollections which hallowed the latter, and made its defects to be almost forgotten, will of course be wanting to the new edifice;

at least until it ceases to be new, and the Englishmen of 100 or 200 years hence (the *Irishmen* having been then for several generations in "*their own house at home*") shall be sitting upon its benches.

There was great anxiety, and *not a little betting* as the time drew nigh for the assembling of the new parliament. Distinct, and widely differing from each other as the hustings professions of Whig and Tory were then, at least in comparison with the present day, yet an uncertainty prevailed as to the actual preponderance of either party.

Undeniably the computations *on paper* were in favour of the Whigs. But the peculiar circumstances attending the first question that was likely to be tried, threw a great doubt and uncertainty upon their securing a working majority. The first question expected was that on the election of a Speaker. Sir C. M. Sutton, Speaker of the late house, (and of its predecessors, since the year 1817,) had, by mixing himself up with the intrigue that brought about the change of ministry, and more remotely the dissolution of parliament, forfeited all title to the support of more than the

one party in whose favour those events had gone, that is, the Tory or Conservative party. But so many were under personal engagements to him, or, through an overstrained delicacy, considered themselves, in some degree, bound by their former votes in his favour, that the result was quite dubious; and if in favour of the Tories, might certainly exercise a very important influence on the rest of the session: the large class of waverers and “waiters upon Providence,” being very likely to be influenced and decided by the first success.

As the day of battle drew nigh, the uncertainty appeared to increase; until *betting* ran nearly as high upon the result of the contest, as on that of the Derby, or “gold cup” race. In the steamer that brought us over to Liverpool, on our way to the opening of parliament, there were hot and angry debates; and one gentleman, connected with a Dublin Tory paper, was earnest in offering a wager on the result to my father, who seemed to surprise him by not considering the occasion quite weighty enough to depart from his established rule of never betting.

From a little after 11 A.M. of Thursday, the 19th of February, 1835, the House began to fill

with members endeavouring to secure seats, according to the inconvenient and scrambling custom that then prevailed. At 2 P.M., Sir Robert Peel, with several of his colleagues of the new ministry, entered and took their places on the treasury bench. The late Speaker was much congratulated *in anticipation*, as he passed up the House, and took his seat where Sir Robert Inglis now usually sits, at the upper end of the bench, on the floor, below the gangway, and on the treasury side. Of course he was in a morning dress, and not in any of the paraphernalia of office; and, in this unaccustomed guise, would have furnished a good moral for Caxton's homily on the decay of *wig-wearing*. The somewhat extreme dignity of manner and bearing which marked him, did not suit so well with the ordinary costume of a private individual, as with the "*big wig*" and flowing robe. Custom, after all, is everything; and unmeaning in modern times as is the practice of wearing the wig and gown, men's eyes are so accustomed to it, and their minds have so associated these habiliments with the office, that even our present excellent Speaker, notwithstanding all his easy and natural dignity, and distinguished

appearance in plain clothes, might, in some degree, suffer by the contrast.

There was a common desire to terminate the debate before post-hour ; in order that the great and general anxiety of the public, throughout the three countries, might be set at rest. The speeches were, consequently, more succinct than usual on "field days." Lord Ellesmere opened the debate, and his speech, as well as several that followed, betrayed symptoms of the angry excitement that was prevailing. Lord Stanley was in his element in this strife ; and yet his speech afforded a strong instance of that disconcerting effect of interruptions upon him which has been before alluded to. The Liberals of the House were no longer in *Coercion-Bill* mood, and his fierce sarcasms at his old colleagues and associates provoked interruptions which made him end his speech in much-admired disorder.

Peel was not "up to the mark." Whether it was the effect of his having been in a manner compelled to steps of which his own judgment did not approve ; whether he had a better and a more accurate estimate of the strength of the opposition arrayed against him, than was the case with the

common herd of his followers; or whatever was the cause, he did not, in this difficult crisis, make an effort worthy of his fame. On the other hand, the leaders of the Whig party were so much hampered by the support they had formerly given to Sir C. M. Sutton, that the debate was but indifferently maintained upon their part also. The Radicals took no part, but left the others to fight it out between them. At last we came to the division. According to the custom that then prevailed, the different sides in a division were not counted simultaneously, but one after the other: that for which the Speaker declared being counted the first. If the Speaker was in the chair, he directed the supposed minority to go out into the lobby until the supposed majority were counted as they sat *in* the House. In a Committee of the whole House, neither party retired; but ranged themselves scrupulously upon opposing benches; the members who voted against those with whom they usually sat and acted, crossing over to the other side for the occasion. Our votes were now taken as in Committee, there being, of course, no Speaker in the chair.

Mr. Ley, the acting chairman, having declared

for the Tories as the supposed majority, the *telling* began with them.

Even at *that* moment, the most entire uncertainty as to the result prevailed with all but a few; and their confident predictions were discredited by our fears. It was a very nervous thing as the tellers successively announced the numbers—299—300—301; for the youngest member knew that 600 was a *figure* at which the attendances in the House rarely arrived.

Still, regardless of our dismay, on went the inexorable voices—302—303—304—305—306!

And then, *at last*, a stop. But a stop giving us little comfort, for no one imagined that we could number 307. A hushed murmur of congratulation ran along the Tory benches; with difficulty repressed by the more experienced and cautious, from bursting into a cheer. Then our tale began; and the array of wands, with which the tellers were then armed, was pointed almost as if in derision into our blank long faces!

250—251!—how long and tedious it appeared as the numbers slowly crept up, and what an fearfully large section of our party seemed to be counted off before the tellers announced 290!

Then a general hush and holding of the breath as the tale went on and on, until 300 came. Some of us who sat in the gallery could not move, until at last—at last—came the welcome sounds, 304—305—306—307!

A cheer, such as even the Monster Meetings of 1843 scarcely could rival, burst from us at the sound; and the remaining numbers (up to 316, which was the total) were completely lost to the hearing. *Such* a cheer has seldom been heard within the walls of Parliament:—it was perfectly stunning, and reached through all the lobbies and passages to the people outside, who responded lustily; without, perhaps, knowing very well of which party it announced the triumph.

It was *very* wrong of us to cheer in that way! We had most discreetly pledged ourselves but the Wednesday before, when our new leader, Lord John Russell, addressed us at one of the much-talked-of "*Lichfield House* meetings," that we would, in case of success, be on our very best behaviour, and not give any sign of exultation, least it should be misconstrued, and be taken as personally offensive to Sir Charles Sutton. But our promises were whistled down the wind in the

tremendous excitement of the moment, and we cheered and cheered again, until the old walls round us fairly rocked with the repeated concussion.

As for the Irish M.P.s, we were, of course, particularly uproarious and disorderly—throwing into our cheers all our old and recent recollections of bitterness, and suffering, and insult, heaped upon Ireland by the party that now sat opposite to us, humiliated, disappointed, defeated. We had, of course, no thought of giving offence to the late Speaker, nor, indeed, any thought of him at all. It was the relief to Ireland, and the brightening prospects for Ireland, resulting from the Tory defeat, which drew those cheers from our inmost souls; and we *could not* have checked ourselves if we had attempted it.

Empty, illusory, and vain have those hopes and prospects been proved; and dear and heavy has been the penalty we have been made to pay for our over-exultation! The snake was scotched, but not killed; and first, by persevering obstruction, and afterwards by direct and active oppression, when, in 1840, they had succeeded in wresting from the enfeebled grasp of the Whigs

the reins of Government, the Tories, or "Conservatives," or by whatever other title it may please them to be known, made poor Ireland suffer for her short-lived rejoicings and expectations.

The "Lichfield House" meetings of the early part of the session of 1835 have been a fertile source of misrepresentation and calumnies. An unfortunate and inconsiderate phrase of Mr. Sheil's, in a speech with reference to them in the course of one of the great party debates of the session, gave colour and some consistency to the charges.

It was alleged, that in those meetings a "compact," to use the chance phrase of Mr. Sheil, was entered into between the Whig Ministry and my father, to the effect that support of the former in the House should be bartered against patronage given to the latter *out* of the House; and that Repeal should be abandoned if some minor measures of relief were passed for Ireland.

This calumny served amply and most efficiently the purposes of the "Tadpoles and Tapers" of the day; and when the additional *fiction* was

thrown in, that the Protestant Church in Ireland was to be sacrificed to the Moloch of agitation, the potion was complete, and John Bull swallowed it to the dregs. Then began again his old "No Popery" nightmare; distracting, disturbing, and impeding with its ravings the course of a rational, a just, and an honest policy towards Ireland, for a period of years not as yet come to a termination.

It has not been in Great Britain alone that this calumny has served the purposes of the enemies of Ireland; and as such, the enemies of the peace and strength of the empire. Their industrious circulation and repetition of it, not only enabled them to array English and Scotch prejudice and passion against us, but sowed a sad division even amongst ourselves. The inveterate habit of suspicion which centuries of ill-treatment, treacheries, and betrayals, have implanted in the Irish mind, was aroused, and every reckless aspirer after notoriety, every jealous and self-admiring scribbler, availed himself of the opportunity to sow distrust and disunion between the people and those in whom they had hitherto confided. And although their unworthy efforts for a time appeared to fail of the

desired result, the seed was not the less assuredly sown, which in later times, and with more diligent, more skilful, and more malignant cultivation, has brought forth such monstrous fruit to unhappy Ireland!

It was an utter and unredeemed calumny! No such compact ever was made. No engagement, no stipulation, no barter, no compromise of any kind, species, or description, took place then, or at any time. My father said there publicly what he had publicly said elsewhere—what he had proclaimed over and over again in Ireland,—that he would give the English legislature a trial, full time to redeem its solemn pledges of the past year, and to show (if it were disposed so to do) to the Irish people, that the benefits which they expected from Repeal could be obtained, and should be granted, without any necessity arising for the re-construction of an Irish Parliament.

He said there, as he had said elsewhere, and had proclaimed in Ireland, that he was to be bought, or crushed, if English statesmen desired to do either. He could be bought, or his power and influence could be crushed and destroyed, by the simple process of righting the many wrongs of Ireland,

relieving her miseries, striking off the manacles which yet hung around her, and doing her full, complete, and entire justice, if that should be found possible without the restoration of her own Parliament.

He declared that he neither expected, nor believed it possible, that such justice could or would be done, save by, and in consequence of the restoration of that Parliament; but that no one should have it in their power to say of him that he had not given the English parliament the fullest and fairest trial and opportunity; nor that he had prevented immediate benefits and measures of instant relief, by forcing on prematurely the larger and more difficult question of a great organic change.

And, finally, he declared before, during, and after the Lichfield House meetings; and openly and publicly in Ireland, as well as in England, that in so far as the Whig ministry showed themselves disposed to treat Ireland fairly, and to do her justice, so far, and no further, should they have his support; and that the same support, to the same extent, was at the command of the Tories, the moment they should determine to change

their councils, and out-rival the Whigs in their promised efforts to benefit the Irish people.

And this is the true history of what has been improperly by some, uncandidly by others, and most dishonestly by yet a third set of persons, denominated *the Lichfield House compact!*

Stupid affairs enough were those meetings in the dusty, unfurnished drawing-rooms of that dingy-fronted mansion. We got lectures on propriety and moderation, and vague assurances, and promises of great things to be done at some *paulo-post-futurum* period; and not a few glimpses of the want of cordial feeling towards us of our English associates. International aversion was so thinly disguised, that some of the English Reformers actually proposed, that, in the consultations which the progress and various incidents of the campaign against Peel might necessitate, the Irish members should *deliberate apart*, and send up the result of their deliberations to the *quasi Upper House* of the English Reformers; who (to use the proper parliamentary formula) “would send an answer by messengers of their own!”

It can scarcely be necessary to say who was the successful candidate for the Speakership in 1835.

Upon the very estimable Mr. Abercrombie, at present Lord Dunfermline, the choice of the majority fell; and during the brief period that he reigned over us, we were kept tightly and smartly to order; and if it were possible to make good and well-conducted boys of the members of the House of Commons, it would have been done under his awful sway!

Our new Speaker having been received and approved *bon gré mal gré*, and the usual number of days having been drawled through with the swearing in of members, we met as a duly constituted House to hear the King's speech, and to debate and pass the address in answer.

The discussion upon the address was much better and more spiritedly maintained than that upon the speakership; it also gave us a better and more promising majority. There was a good deal of amusement in noting the surly looks and second-hand superciliousness of the palace-officials, as the victorious majority of the Commons trooped through the lobbies of St. James's, bearing up the amended address, to present it to his Majesty. Some said that our great offence was the revolutionary plainness of our attire, few of our party

being in court dress; but whatever the reason was, the little dogs in office as well as the big showed their teeth, though they could not bite at us, as we swept along to open our battery of constitutional coercion upon the throne.

Poor William the IVth received us gruffly enough, and after having listened with very evident impatience and indocility to the species of lecture read to him in the alterations which his ministers' plan of the address had undergone, dismissed us with a few sentences, quite as little satisfactory, and as devoid of practical significance, as any royal speech, short or long, that ever was drawn up by minister and spoken by monarch.

We had walked from the House, the day being fine, to present the address; and we returned in the same way, crossing St. James's Park. Next day the Tory papers found consolation in announcing that the Liberal members had *walked up* with the address, *because they could not afford to pay for carriages*.

This was of a piece with the explanation they gave, at a later period of the session, of the constant minorities of their party. They found out that the young "Conservative" members were so

sought after in society, that they could not get away from dinner-room, or concert, or ball, to attend their parliamentary duties; while the Radical members, and in particular the Irish members, attended steadily and constantly; because we were of a class to whom a good and well staunch roof, a warm room, and plenty of light for some hours of the evening, were positive luxuries!

CHAPTER VII.

OPPOSITION TO THE NEW MINISTRY.—SIR ROBERT PEEL.—FEARGUS O'CONNOR.—HIS ELECTIONEERING TACTICS.—YOUGHAL.—RT. HON. T. B. C. SMYTH.—ABSURD OBJECTIONS.—THE “ROYAL REEFER.”—“TEA-TASTRESS TO THE LADY-LIEUTENANT.”—THE OLD TIPSTAFF.—AN ELECTION SCENE.—BRIBERY.—AN HONEST VOTER.—LONDON WATERMEN.—AN ELECTION BILL.—COLONEL FAIRMAN.—LORD JOHN RUSSELL.—JACK LAWLESS.—LORD MORPETH.—A HAT NOT FIT FOR A GENTLEMAN.

“By small degrees, and beautifully *greater*,” our majorities increased during the five or six weeks that it took to convince Sir Robert Peel’s supporters, (not himself, for he was not likely to have been a moment deceived as to the true state of parties,) that the loaves and fishes were not to remain in their hands.

His having consented to retain office for so long a period after the hostility of the House to his administration was made evident, has been inconsiderately blamed. Had he resigned early, there would not only have been violent reclamations against him, among his official and parlia-

mentary supporters; but the large mass of the English public out of doors, with whose principles he was and is identified, would have accused him of timidity and desertion. He was bound, then, for his own credit, and for the sake of his influence, future as well as present, to hold out to the last; and not to yield until the inevitable and long foreseen *checkmate* should be given.

It is extraordinary, considering the very decided *bent* of Toryism that is in the English public mind, that the election returns of 1834-5 should have given a majority to the Whigs. The *hurrah* of the Reform times had completely subsided: the experience of two sessions had abundantly demonstrated that the new party in power were of opinion that Reform had gone far enough, in placing them there. The real Liberals throughout the country were disappointed, disgusted, divided, desponding. The Tories, or "Conservatives" as I must henceforth style them, had, like Milton's darkened spirits, entirely shaken off the first stupor of their fall, and had taken fresh courage from defeat; and the potent weapon of bribery, so recklessly and regularly employed at English elections, was far more at their command

than at that of the less wealthy and influential Reformers.

Their failure in 1835 can have been owing but to the one cause, that valuable though sometimes inconvenient quality of *tenacity*, with which John Bull holds to an idea, or principle, once fully impressed upon his mind. Like all heavy bodies that have got a momentum in one direction, it requires no inconsiderable pressure and skill to turn him in a new, at least until the old impetus is entirely expended; and time and sufficient effort had not been given to accomplish this purpose, when the general election we are speaking of occurred.

It could not, however, be said that the war was feebly and inefficiently waged, either on the whole or in particular contests. More bitterness and harder fighting was seldom witnessed before, and has scarcely been outdone since. This was the case all over England, and *of course* it was the case in Ireland.

I had the assistance of Feargus O'Connor at my election, (for the borough of Youghal, county of Cork.) The opposing interest was strong—particularly the Duke of Devonshire, whose agents claimed for him the control of this borough, as they

had done that of its not very distant neighbour, Dungarvon. Then came the Tory corporation, with all its freemen; and on my side were only the poor Liberal householders, many of them suffering for their patriotism on a previous occasion.

Feergus was not as happy here as in his former electioneering tactics. He rattled away speeches enough, and tramped about through the ancient and venerable mud of that old fortress-town with great industry and éclat; but he contrived to start the only possible subject on which there could have been a disagreement between my constituents and me—the *Corn Laws*. I had voted for their repeal; and my constituents were many of them engaged in, or dependent on, the Irish corn-trade, and had the usual and natural prepossessions on the subject of parties so engaged; but luckily Feergus's maladroitness did not attract their notice.

My opponent was the present respected Master of the Rolls in Ireland, the Right Hon. T. B. C. Smyth: one who gave me a stout contest, and still severer petition afterwards, but with whose personal demeanour and inoffensive, though very determined maintenance of his "Ascendancy" principles, I could have no reason to complain. With such a man, and so supported as he was, the contest was

protracted to the utmost verge the law allowed ; and many and queer were the incidents that from time to time occurred.

It will give the English reader some idea of the powers of obstruction and annoyance which the very defective and purposely-encumbered state of the Irish electoral law places in the hands of those who choose to use them, when the fact is stated, that it took nearly the whole of five days to poll some 270 or 280, all that could by any means be brought up, out of a constituency of not more, as I recollect, than 300 upon the whole !

The small attorneys usually employed in the election booths are sadly reckless of the multitude of unnecessary oaths which they insist on making the opposing party's voters take, with the sole view of creating delays. Another and a more venial device is the drawing up absurd objections, which tends to the crowding of the assessor's room, and the delay and obstruction of his real business. Objection-papers go up, with the plea recorded on them, that the voter is "an ill-looking fellow,"—that he "has several holes in his coat,"—that he "wears a shocking bad hat," &c.

The solitary polling-booth at this, as at my

former election at Youghal, was the so-called *Court house*, an ancient (but *not* venerable) billiard-chamber, celebrated in Youghal annals as having been the scene of one of the youthful visitations, and no doubt of the sailor-freaks, of the "*Royal Reefer*," hight Prince William Henry, and in my time no other than the reigning monarch, William the Fourth.

Indeed, the local historians of what is now Mr. Chisholm Anstey's good and liege town, are confident in their boast, that it was within the circuit of their borough where resided the stout Quaker, who showed the young Prince the door, on account of some noisy irregularity, telling him at the same time:

"Were it George, thy royal father, he should not do in my house what thou hast done!"

Not only royalty, but *vice-royalty* had its memorials at Youghal—in the latter case, a living one. A most respectable and very aged lady resided there in 1835, who rejoiced in the title (and *pension*, of course,) of "*Tea-Tastress to the Lady-Lieutenant!!*"

During the taking of the votes, there were at the bottom of the long, low, and narrow, inconvenient apartment I have mentioned, a motley

crowd, exercising functions somewhat similar to those of the chorus in the ancient Greek dramas. They kept up a running fire of comments and pungent remarks upon all that was going forward, and occasionally broke in upon the proceedings with some home thrust at individuals peculiarly obnoxious to them.

Woe betide the unhappy wight that has a hole in his *moral* coat, if he show himself at an Irish election! Note is sure to be taken of it; and while he *fusses* about, good man, absorbed in his electioneering labours, a sarcasm keen as steel, and sudden as a flash of lightning, reminds him of some old folly or peccadillo he had fondly hoped forgotten years ago, and overwhelms him with ridicule and confusion, despite of the most valiant efforts to look unconcerned, or to vindicate his insulted dignity!

These electioneering by-plays were exceedingly distasteful to the tipstaff or crier of the court, an old pensioner, as irascible and dogmatic as most of his class, and with his own ideas of the *King's English*, as well as of most things else.

In vain the worthy Mayor would call on him to make proclamation word for word after him. The old soldier had his own dialect, into which he most

punctually translated the words as they came ; for instance :—

Mayor. “All those that are—electors of Youghal,” &c. &c.

Crier. “*Thim as iz—elicturs o’ Yo’hal,*” &c. &c.

But if it was difficult to keep the old soldier *to book*, in repetitions, the giant labour was with the voters, when they were called on to repeat the words of the *qualification* or *bribery* oaths, after the official whose duty it was to administer it to them, when required by either party. Some such scene as the following has occurred a hundred times upon such occasions, the actors being the sheriff’s deputy presiding in the polling booth, his clerk, the voter, and occasionally one or other of the attorneys or election agents there stationed.

Clerk. “Now repeat the words after me, ‘I, Patrick O’Shaughnessy,’” (or Tim Leary, as the case may be.)—

Voter. “Yis, that’s me.”

Deputy. “That won’t do, voter ; you must say exactly as the clerk says.”

Voter. “Yis, your honour !—I will, Sir.”

Clerk. “I, Patrick O’Shaughnessy, do swear—”

Voter. “Yis, I do.”

Clerk. “Come, come, you stupid fellow, repeat the words after me, ‘I, Patrick O’Shaughnessy,’ &c. &c.

Voter. “Well, anything for a quiet life;—‘I, Patrick O’Shaughnessy, do swear—’”

Clerk. “‘That I am the same Patrick O’Shaughnessy whose name appears in this certificate.’”

Voter. “‘That I am—the same’—Arrah! [indignantly] to be sure I am! Who else would I be? Is it wanting to make game of me you are?”

Deputy. “Come, come, voter, I’ll send you off the table if you don’t do as you’re bid, and not be wasting our time in this manner. Repeat after the clerk, Sir, as you are told, or I won’t take your vote at all!”

Voter. “Well, sure I will, Sir, I will! This is a poor case, now! Well,—‘that I am the same,’ &c. &c.—Will that *plaze* ye?”—[*to the Clerk.*]

Clerk. “Silence, Sir!—‘And that I have not before voted at this election.’”

Voter. “No! the *Divil* a vote!—Well, you know it yourself that I wasn’t up here before to-day!” &c. &c.

Again, when the Bribery Oath is being put.

Clerk. “ ‘ And that I have not received anything; nor hath any one in trust for me.’ ”

Voter. “ No !—the dickens a ha-porth [*halfpenny worth*], nor any one for me either !—Troth, if it was a thing that I was goin’ to sell my conscience that way, it’s little I’d thrust [*trust*] to another to *resave* the vally [*value*] for me !” &c. &c.

At length—at long last—the poor clerk gets him to the end of the oath, and the formula of kissing the book is gone through. This is the signal for a new difficulty. Up starts the opposing attorney, ripe and ready for a *row*, and protests that the man did not “kiss fair;”—that he “*kissed his thumb*” instead of the book.

At such an imputation upon his honesty and due regard for his oath, the indignation of the voter knows no bounds :

“ Kiss my thumb, indeed !—kiss your *granny* !—Troth, then, if *you* only said yer prayers this fine mornin’ as surely as I kissed the book, the *ould boy below* wouldn’t have the howld [*hold*] of yer sowl that he has, Misthur Attorney ! ”

Here the sensitive Professional appeals to the Deputy for protection, amid the shouts of laughter of the people in the body of the court, while his

learned brother at the other side jumps up, quite as smartly, to argue the matter with him. The Deputy storms; the police vainly shout for "Silence!" and meantime the voter quietly slips away, perfectly satisfied with himself, since he had an opportunity of giving an answer to his assailant, and greatly rejoicing in the hubbub and confusion he has created.

But in making any allusion, however passing, to the conduct of Irish electors, it would be an omission altogether inexcusable, to say nothing of the extraordinary virtue which so many of them have displayed in the hour of sore and bitter trial.

Landlords and agents have, in numberless instances, attended in the polling booth to note down, for future persecution, the names of tenants and dependants who came to record their votes for their country. And notwithstanding the ominous presence and often the open threats of those virtual arbiters of their lives and of the lives of their wretched families,—notwithstanding, too, the large bribes offered freely, and almost without any disguise,—thousands have gone up, and done their duty to Ireland, not with a parade of defiance or vain-gloriousness, but with that meek unas-

suming while invincible firmness that marks and constitutes real heroism of character.

At Youghal, at the election of which mention has been made, a number of poor artisans, mainly dependent on the Orange Corporation, voted manfully against their employers, in spite of every effort of bribery and intimidation. One poor nailer, in particular, showed a high degree of virtue. I believe it was considered that his example would be of great importance, owing to the notoriety and usual determinedness of his patriotism; and as it was hopeless to expect he could be got to vote the wrong way, the attempt was made to induce him to *leave Youghal* before the election, and of course to remain away till its conclusion.

For this end, he was offered 200*l.*; his house, furniture, whole stock of goods, working tools and all, being worth, at a good valuation, perhaps some seven or eight pounds. And he most indignantly spurned at the offer, remained in town, and voted against his employers.

To those acquainted with Irish elections, this incident will appear, as in fact on such occasions it is, one of a very common order. I am bound to

bear my testimony, after a good deal of electioneering experience in Ireland, that such conduct is the rule and not the exception. And I cannot express or describe the feeling that I have experienced, when, coming fresh from scenes like these, I have, in the chances of parliamentary duty, been called upon to sit on English election committees, there to hear of men worth 10,000*l.* taking a 10*l.* bribe; to say nothing of the ordinary and matter-of-course present to all comers of one or two sovereigns, or, as they were called at the Liverpool elections, “coriander seeds.”

It is reported of the watermen of London, at the election of 1841, that being determined Reformers, they declared that Lord John Russell might have their votes for 3000*l.*; whereas if the Tory party desired to have them they should pay 5,000*l.*

And I have myself heard an English witness explain the whole morality of vote trafficking in some such way as the following:—

“If I were going to vote for Mr. A, and that Mr. B comes and gives me money to vote for him; and that I *do* vote for Mr. B,—why then

that's what I call bribery and corruption. But if I am going to vote for Mr. A, and that *he* gives me the money ; then I say there's no bribery and no harm in that."

As a refreshing *pendant* for my English readers to these notices of the frailty of some of their fellow countrymen, when election bribes are going, I will now give a veritable "*treating*" bill, furnished at an *Irish* election, not a great number of years ago, to an Irish Baronet since dead ; a gentleman whose most respectable and excellent successor is now in the House, a living witness, if necessary, to the authenticity of this valuable document.

"*My Bill. Bryan Garity † his mark.*

	£	s.	d.
"To <i>ating</i> [eating] 16 Freeholders above stairs for Sir Marks, at three shillings and <i>thruppence</i> a head, is to me.	2	12	0
"To <i>ating</i> 16 more [!] below stairs, and <i>Two Priests, after supper</i> ,—[It was well the Established Church did not come in this fellow's way " <i>after supper</i> ,"]—is to me	2	15	9
"To six beds in one room ; and four in another ; at two guineas every bed ; and <i>not more than four</i> in any one bed at any time : cheap enough, the Lord knows ! is to me	22	15	0
"To eighteen horses and five <i>mewles</i> [<i>mules</i>], at thirteen-pence every one of them : And for a man <i>which was lost</i> [!] on the head of watching them all night, is to me	5	5	0

	£	s.	d.
"For breakfast on <i>tay</i> , in the morning, for every one of them, [horses and <i>newles</i> too, <i>it is to be hoped</i> ,] and as many more as they brought, as near as I can guess, is to me	4	12	0
"To <i>raw</i> whiskey and punch, <i>without talking of pipes or tobacco</i> , as well as for porter; and as well as for breaking the potato-pot and other glasses [!] and delf, for the first day and night <i>I am not very sure</i> , [conscientious fellow !] but for the three days and a half of the election, as little as I can call it, <i>and to be very exact</i> , [!] it is in all, or thereabouts, as <i>near as I can guess</i> , and <i>not to be too particular</i> , is to me, at the least	79	15	0

"Sir Marks," whoever he was, cannot have resisted payment of this last item at any rate, after so many careful reservations put around to make it *safe*. But we have not by any means got to the end of the account.

"For shaving and cropping <i>off the heads</i> [!!!] of 49 Freeholders <i>for Sir Marks</i> , [not stated, by the way, whether for <i>dinner</i> or <i>supper</i> ,] at thirteen pence <i>every head of them</i> , by my brother, <i>who has a vote</i> [a vote]; is to me	2	13	1	.
"For a <i>womit</i> [<i>w</i> in place of <i>v</i>] and nurse for poor Tim Kiernan in the middle of the night, when he was <i>not expected</i> , [i.e. <i>not expected to live</i> ,] is to me <i>ten hog</i> —[Anglicè]	0	10	10	

"Signed, *in the place of Jemmy Carr's Wife* [!]

his
 "BRYAN + GARITY.
 mark.

“Sum of the total,
[otherwise, “tottle of the hull.”]

£	s.	d.	
2	12	00	[!]
2	15	09	
22	15	00	
5	5	00	
4	12	00	
79	15	00	[!]
2	13	01	[!]
	10	10	
<hr/>			
£110	18	7	”

Note:—*I don't talk of the Piper, or for keeping him sober so long as he was so, [another most prudent reservation,] this is to me £0 0 0 !*

“ You may say 111*l.* ; so please your Honour, Sir Marks, send me *this eleven hundred pounds [!!!] by Bryan himself,*”—[it would have been a pity not, after his drawing up such a bill for *Jemmy Carr's wife,*] “send it to me by *Bryan himself,* who *and* I prays for your success always in T——; *and no more at present!*”

“*Litera scripta*” *manet.*—The original of the foregoing is, I understand, most religiously preserved, as it well deserved to be ; and there are plenty of living witnesses to satisfy the most sceptical.

During two or three months of this session the famous exposure was made, (partly in various debates in both Houses, and partly by the researches of a Committee,) of the constitution and objects of the institution of Orangeism.

We had at our bar, for a couple of days' examination, the redoubtable Colonel William Blennerhassett Fairman, Secretary to the Orangemen of England, and subordinate engineer of the reputed plot to seat "Ernest of Hanover," in those days "Ernest of Cumberland," upon the throne, after the demise of King William the Fourth, to the exclusion of her present Most Gracious Majesty. Notwithstanding the gallant manner in which the undaunted Colonel ruffled his feathers at the *poking* questions put to him, while undergoing the *peine forte et dure* of being cross-questioned at our bar, and despite too of the vigorous diversions in his favour continually made by the friends, patrons, and partisans in the House of the Orangemen, such troublesome and awkward facts were beginning to come out as to the *conjuración manquée*" of this party, that there was a parliamentary surrender at discretion to stop further inquiry, and save the plotters, big and little, from condign and most deserved punishment.

To such of us as had not been in Parliament previous to, and at the time of the Reform Bill, Lord John Russell, up to the session of 1835, had

by no means appeared to merit the reputation we had believed him to enjoy as a speaker.

Although the noble lord in question is certainly not a very eager and over-precipitate advocate of political changes, and on the contrary is more to be remarked for a disposition to go to sleep over them, and to continue that sleep to a very late hour indeed, this measure of justice must be dealt to him, that when he has at last prevailed on himself to stir, and is determined to make an advance, he seems to speak with *far more nerve* and earnestness, and certainly with far greater effect upon his auditory, than when proposing or defending measures of restriction, severity, and injustice.

In the latter case he is of the earth, *earthly* :— heavy, laboured, stiff, dogmatical, and *dogged*.

In the former he surprises by the bursts of a singular and really chastened eloquence ; glittering over the usual correct coldness of his delivery, like sunshine over an ice-encumbered stream.

Of his powers of sarcasm, the observation may be hazarded, that with him that very serviceable but ignoble weapon is perhaps more keen and piercing than when wielded by almost any other

in the House. To use the expressive language of the "Fancy," he is "*in to you* before you are aware of it."

In the parliamentary campaign of the year with which I am at present dealing, Lord John Russell "came out" in a far superior style to that of which we novices had had experience before. During the preceding sessions he had been hampered with the trammels of the Stanley-Grey policy — a policy towards which he has of late manifested so lamentable an inclination to return, especially in the case of unhappy Ireland. That it should be in her case in which this retrograde disposition has thus been particularly displayed by him, is no matter of wonder to us, whom bitter experience has taught, that an attack upon Ireland and the infliction of new injustice upon her, seem ever to be the readiest means and most practicable bond of reconciliation, or at least of truce, between contending English parties.

"The people of England," said the late Lord Sydenham, in a letter to Lord John Russell, written at the time of the death-struggle of the Whig Ministry in 1841, and published after the noble lord's death;—"the people of Eng-

land do not care a rush for your Irish hobby-horses!"

The "Irish hobby-horses" in question at that time were an improved electoral franchise for Ireland—her franchise as then and now existing being admittedly most defective; an equalization of corporate privileges with those enjoyed by the municipalities of Great Britain; a revision of the Grand Jury laws; and some species of arrangement of the distracted relation between landlord and tenant in Ireland.

Each and every one of these were matters of great moment to that unlucky country, and she remains to this day without them! The Whigs did certainly endeavour to do her some justice in these respects, but finding that the attempt only served to bring odium upon them in England, they have abandoned it and adopted Lord Sydenham's hint—dismounting with a vengeance from their *Irish hobby-horses*, and rarely thinking of poor Ireland, save when some petty, paltry, stinging coercion is to be inflicted upon her.

Poor "Jack Lawless," the *honest Jack Lawless* of the old Catholic Association, was once heard to remark of one of his brother agitators,

(a gentleman who has lately ceased to be an M.P. and attained a high office in one of the British dependencies,) “T. W— is indeed a very clever fellow,—very. He has a great deal of eloquent fluency, and a highly educated mind: but—but he bewilders himself sometimes with his philosophic theories; in fact, he *metaphysicallizes* himself into *balderdash*!!”

Without going quite so far, and adopting, with reference to Lord John Russell’s theories of constitutional liberty, the ingenious homeliness of Jack Lawless’s phrase, the spirit of the remark has a thorough application. Perhaps another of the old “Catholic agitators,” who lives to exercise his happy ingenuity of phrase-making, would re-cast the remark to suit the noble lord’s case, and would say of him, that his notions of liberty do at times seem as if they had been “metaphysicallized into impalpable tenuity.”

Whatsoever may be the cause, whether a natural disinclination to exertion, where the pressure upon him is not direct and instant; want of comprehension (unlikely in such a man) of all the bearings of a great principle, or want of good will to the work; certain it is, that *popular* rights have not found in

him the ardent, earnest, persevering advocate and promoter, that a public man with his opportunities and position could have been, so efficiently and so happily for his own renown, and for the well-being of the British people.

Chartism could never have raised its wild and unkempt head, if Lord John Russell had but manifested and acted upon an earnest and steady resolution to advance in the path of just and necessary, while moderate and well considered reforms.

But hitherto he has only too closely copied the examples of the cunning artificers of the aristocratic Revolution of 1688, from one of the most prominent but least fortunate of whom he traces collateral descent. They who bade the English people to rejoice

“ O'er one fall'n tyrant,”

did not care to make others besides themselves “more free.” They sought not to protect the people from the oligarchic influences which have since the epoch just named replaced the monarchy; and which have operated and are operating, fully as much as ever did the latter, to the restriction

and practical denial of many of the privileges loudly promised to all at the time of the Revolution, but then really secured to the aristocratic class alone, and for many a long year afterwards solely enjoyed by them.

Not even all Macauley's sparkling talent, unflinching boldness, and most laborious ingenuity in the great Whig party pamphlet that he is publishing as a History of England from the time of the Revolution, have enabled him to avoid making damning confessions as to the characters of the prime agents in the expulsion of the weak and arbitrary, but quite as much *sinned against as sinning* James.

That Lord John Russell has better things *in him*, than, considering the *rope-dancing* precariousness of his present position—a minister upon sufferance, in fact,—he is at all anxious to demonstrate just now; and that he is capable, if he will only be “greatly daring” enough to enter upon the task, of bringing to a happy solution the difficult problems of government with regard to the international relations between Great Britain and Ireland, and the relations between classes in both countries, which the extraordinary events that have occurred

in Europe during the last eighteen months have tended, and in their ulterior consequences may still more tend, to press upon the consideration of British statesmen, is the belief of many; and a very justifiable belief in those who bear in mind the occasional indications of ability, even for such a large and noble task, that have from time to time escaped from him, despite of all his frozen caution and reserve.

It is with him a favourite practice to quote Burke; and it were well if he were thus reminded of the blot upon Burke's fame—the reproach that he too well merited—of having

“ ——— narrow'd his mind,
And to party given up what was meant for mankind.”

Another of the Whig leaders, Lord Morpeth, the present Earl of Carlisle, “*came out*” very unexpectedly in the session of 1835.

Whenever he had spoken previous to that session, he had spoken *well*—perhaps *too well*; too much of a prize essay about his oratorical efforts. This peculiarity was now not entirely gone, perhaps, but put out of sight completely by the practical tendency and matter of his speeches. He

rose to the occasion, and having allowed himself to be put in an important and difficult office—that of Secretary for Ireland—he readily accepted and proved himself equal to its labours and responsibilities, both in and out of the House. And, until the abandonment of the “Irish *hobby-horses*” before alluded to, he most creditably and efficiently maintained his part.

Latterly he has allowed indolence to steal upon him. Perhaps in the Upper House he may be awakened to exertion, by the straitened circumstances there of his party. But “it was pity of him” to disappoint the expectations which his sudden energy of 1835-38 gave rise to among the well-wishers of a liberal Ministry.

For the first time, under his regime, the Irish members (and once for all I wish to say that I use this phrase exactly as it was used in 1833-35, and later years—namely, as designating the Irish *popular* members,) were treated with something of proper consideration, their opinions consulted, and their advice, on some occasions and to some extent, adopted.

A circumstance of not a little amusement arose, or by some *farceur* was *made* to arise, out of this

intercourse between the Irish members and the noble Secretary for Ireland.

One of the Irish members, a gentleman much and deservedly respected, and a man of considerable wealth, was singularly negligent in his dress; wearing habiliments, and especially a *hat*, of a very *ancient* date indeed.

This gentleman, as representative for a very important locality, had occasion several times to call at the Irish office, and had been always received with the peculiarly bland courtesy that marked, and according to veracious accounts still marks, the noble lord then at the head of that office.

Somewhere about the middle of June or July, 1835, Mr. R—— (the honourable member in question) called, and after a very brief delay was admitted to Lord Morpeth.

After the usual courtesies and the usual *banale* observations on the weather, it is recorded that Lord Morpeth looked rather inquiringly at his visitor.

“I am come, my lord, to thank your lordship,” said the latter, answering the look promptly; “I am greatly obliged to your lordship.”

“Oh—h—h! Mr. R——,” said Lord Morpeth,

not recollecting exactly what he was thanked for, but supposing it must have been some attention to one of Mr. R——'s recommendations, "I am very happy that you are so satisfied. I shall be always happy to be of any service in my power."

"I am much obliged to your lordship; it was very kind of you; I could not, and I did not, mistake your motive for a moment; and I beg to say I shall always be obliged to your lordship for such communications."

The mystified Secretary stared a little at some of the terms of this address; but seeing that his visitor, however strangely he expressed himself, appeared thoroughly and warmly in earnest, he made the best of it by again bowing, and expressing again his desire always to give similar satisfaction.

"I am quite sure of it, my lord; and I am, I beg again to say, greatly obliged to your lordship; and here, my lord, here is——*my hat*."

"YOUR HAT, Mr. R——!"

"Yes, my lord, *my hat*! I hope your lordship approves of it."

"Oh—h! certainly—certainly, Mr. R——, it is a—very nice hat indeed—*very*—but——"

“I am very glad your lordship likes it. I assure you I took great pains to get one which you would consider unobjectionable; and to prove to you what a value I place upon your advice.”

“*My advice!* Mr. R——, (looking aghast, and half inclined to ring the bell)—*my advice!*”

“Yes, my lord; according to your own note here—”

And to Lord Morpeth's amazement he was handed a note, addressed as from himself to Mr. R——, representing in the kindest, most considerate, and indeed affectionate manner, that such was the writer's solicitude for the proper estimation of the Irish M.P.s, that he was induced to step beyond the limits, not only of his office, but of the privileges of ordinary acquaintance, to suggest in private and strict confidence to Mr. R——, *that his hat was not exactly what a gentleman of his position and wealth ought to wear!*”

CHAPTER VIII.

PARLIAMENTARY EXCITABILITY.—SCENA BETWEEN LORD ALTHORP AND MR. SHEIL.—THEY ARE TAKEN INTO CUSTODY, APOLOGIZE, ARE REPRIMANDED, AND LIBERATED.—CHURCH TEMPORALITIES BILL.—ATTACKS ON MR. O'CONNELL.—MISREPRESENTATIONS OF FEARGUS O'CONNOR, ETC.—KEEN-SIGHTEDNESS OF MR. O'CONNELL—HIS JUDGMENT OF MEN.—MEETS WITH INGRATITUDE AND DESERTION FROM FRIENDS.—ELECTION PETITIONS.—SOLEMN REPRIMAND.—PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGES.—SIR JAMES GRAHAM.—SIR FRANCIS BURDETT (OLD GLORY).—PARLIAMENT PROROGUED.

BESIDES the successful campaign against Peel and his over-precipitate party, and the surrender at discretion of the Great Grand-masters, *little* Grand-masters, *Deputy Grands*, Purple Marksmen, &c. &c. of the Cumberland-Fairman confederacy, we had plenty of excitement during the Session.

And *dearly* does the House of Commons love excitement! It cannot choose but plead guilty to the soft impeachment of being, in its corporate capacity, the most *mischief-loving* assembly in the world! A most important question will often command but an unwilling bodily attendance, and no mental attention whatsoever: whereas, let it be

but known, or whispered, that a teasing question is to be put to the Minister of the day, a point of privilege to be vindicated at the expense of some unfortunate wight out of doors, or a sharp encounter of wits, or of something worse, likely to "come off" between two honourable and hostile members; and the benches are sure to be crowded, and the most exemplary silence and eager attention will everywhere prevail!

We had, in the first place, a greater number than I have witnessed before or since of those personal "rows," which Dickens has so amusingly satirized in the immortal "passage of *words*" between Mr. Pickwick and the audacious linen-draper. These occurrences, the natural ebullitions of the overheated and irritated state of party-feeling, gave great annoyance and difficulty to our respected Speaker; who, thoroughly versed in all the "wise saws and modern instances," as well as ancient precedents, that it behoveth Speaker to have at his fingers' ends, had not been quite so happy in acquiring that dignity of mien and manner which is potent of itself to "unthread the rude eye of rebellion," and bring even Members of Parliament to their senses.

But decision and dignity will not always carry the day upon these occasions. In the preceding session—that of 1834, we had the grand *scena* between Lord Althorp and Mr. Sheil; excited by a mutual contradiction on the subject of a charge made against the latter, of having privately expressed approbation of the Irish Coercion Bill, when publicly voting and speaking against it.

In vain Sir C. M. Sutton thundered against each of the delinquents on that occasion; perhaps *a lèetle more* against the then private member, Mr. Sheil, than against his noble and official antagonist. In vain friend after friend of either party tried their suasive eloquence, and exhausted their officious ingenuity to prove “there was nothing in it,” and prevent *something* from being made out of nothing. Lord Althorp threw himself round into his ordinary half-sitting, half-sleeping position, “bow on,” (as a nautical member remarked,) “to the Chair, like a snug ship hove to in a breeze,” and looked *glum* and obstinate: Sheil, at the other side, folded his arms tightly, and shrugged himself up, as though to concentrate and keep hot his wrath, his brow being firmly knit the while—

“And ever and anon he bit his bleeding lip.”

At length, persuasion and awful menace failing of effect, the *ineluctabile tempus* arrived, when both were ordered off for instant incarceration!

First came the tall, gaunt, very gentlemanly, and, despite of his years and of his pacific garb, the still military figure of good old Colonel Seymour. Then shuffled along Lord Althorp, with his hands in his side pockets, and a look as quiet, easy, and innocent of ill, as any one of his own fleecy favourites, when being led to the slaughter. Next came a subordinate of our good sergent-at-arms, twice as important-looking, and ten times more austere than his principal. Him followed next the second prisoner, to whom, as an Irishman, rebellion seemed to come too natural to let him be put much out of his way; and the awful procession closed with yet another official, stern, vigilant, and determined. Two hours of *carcere duro* were undergone by both patients, and then came apologies to the insulted majesty of the House of Commons, assurances that "matters should go no farther," and finally, liberation with a reprimand.

In 1835 we never got so far through the points of a quarrel as to be laid hands upon in the man-

ner just described; but there were a number of squabbles with infinitely less reason, and less credit to the parties.

The other, and more rational excitements of the session, were given us by the discussions on the proposed Reforms in the Corporations of England; the Irish Tithe and Franchise bills; the party questions arising out of Controverted Elections, and the question of the "Appropriation Clause."

This latter was the designation given to the 147th clause of Lord Stanley's Church Temporalities Bill of 1833, dropped by him out of the bill in that year, and revived in the motions of Mr. Ward, M.P. for St. Alban's, until at last taken up again by the Whigs in their advance against Sir Robert Peel.

My father was a peculiar object of attack. The rally that had been made in Ireland had in fact turned the scale between the contending influences in the House. It would have been a varying and alternating success between the Whigs and the Tories, but for the Irish contingent, who were sure to carry the day for the former, not through any peculiar affection for them, but simply because

they then were initiating, and seemed determined to carry out good measures for Ireland.

Ireland having thus once more baulked the "Tory," or Conservative party, she was not to be forgiven; and Daniel O'Connell being then accredited by her as her representative, on his devoted head the thunder was first to fall.

Every possible form and description of charge and imputation was vomited against him by the organs of Conservative opinion at the press. And no young knight rode more zealously at the quintain, in his earlier practices of arms, than did the young "fire-eyed disputants" of that party essay themselves against Daniel O'Connell; cheered on, and indeed imitated as they were by their more practised and more inveterate seniors. The main accusations were:—1st. He had coerced the unfortunate peasant and artizan-voters of Ireland. 2d. He had caused a death's-head and cross-bones to be affixed to the doors of every man who had not voted as he (Daniel O'Connell) chose. 3d. He had trafficked in Parliamentary seats;—(as, for instance, when he put Raphael, "the *incomprehensible*," to the *enormous* expense of 2000*l.* for a *severely contested county election*; including preparations for the

petition! Furthermore, and 4thly. He had accepted of 800*l.*, or peradventure 900*l.*, to change his vote on the Factory Labourers' Short-Hour question of that time; and 5th, and worst crime of all, had expressed a derogatory opinion of the state of morality in England, particularly among the lower order of females.

In fact, the multitudinous and many-coloured popular accusations against Napoleon in the times of Pitt, were now rivalled, if not outdone, by those against O'Connell. If the latter had not actually—

“ Made the quatern loaf and Luddites rise,
And fill'd the butchers' shops with large blue flies !”

he had, at any rate, grievously interfered with Tory enjoyment of the *loaves and fishes*.

The two *English* calumnies against him were the most successful; though all were readily caught up by the predisposed and prejudiced public mind here. To do that which *he* scorned to do throughout his life-time—namely, to enter into a refutation of these and a thousand other empty and malignant falsehoods uttered against him, would be as derogatory to his memory, as it would be an entire waste of time. The candid mind has long since detected their hollowness and rejected them; the

prejudiced and the base in spirit would not be convinced—the former, loth to part with the darling lie so long hugged to their bosoms; the latter, judging of others by themselves.

The fifth calumny was potently used against him with the English commonalty, by Feargus O'Connor, Richard Oastler, and other such “small deer;” and was based upon a gross misrepresentation of a passage in one of his public letters; where, arguing against the introduction of Poor-laws into Ireland, he illustrated his argument by a quotation from one of the Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the Poor-law System in England, testifying to the disastrous operation of that system upon female morality.

For nothing was he more remarkable than for his high-souled contempt and disregard of calumny. The thousand shafts that were weekly, daily, hourly shot against him, fell off innocuous and unnoticed, save and except where sent by one whom he had considered *a friend*.

A shaft from such a quarter was indeed the *lethalis arundo*;—without cause or justification, as the attack ever proved. No man ever felt unkindness, ingratitude, betrayal, more keenly and

more painfully ; and unfortunately he was doomed to experience several instances of one, or other, or all three of these visitations from men with whom he thought he had contracted the strongest relations of private friendship.

But the positive shock and *blow*, which it was evident that he ever underwent upon such occasions, were not caused in any manner or degree whatsoever by any deficiency of true and full appreciation of the weakness, instability, and strange perversity of human nature.

No man of the present, or of preceding ages, did or could possess a deeper, clearer, more intuitive and accurate insight into his fellow-men, than Daniel O'Connell. He made little boast of his keensightedness indeed : for he abhorred cynicism, and felt much more pained than pleased, in contemplating the darker side of man ; preferring even to be injured by trusting too readily and amply, rather than to nourish and brood over suspicions, jealousies, and doubts.

At times, however, indications of his real judgment of men made themselves visible, almost in spite of himself. A gentleman whom he had seriously obliged, was one day overpowering him with

thanks, and assuring him he would be “eternally grateful.”

“Don’t pledge yourself too strongly, my good Sir,” said Mr. O’Connell, “and don’t give yourself so much trouble to assure me. I am quite convinced that you entirely mean, *at present*, what you say. But mark my words: *I have obliged you too much* to meet a return. You will yet attack me, and *bitterly*; and you shall be welcome so to do!”

It fell out exactly as he said, notwithstanding the earnest protestations of the object of his kindness: and the realization of the prophecy gave no surprise to its author, and caused no feeling in his mind beyond that of indulgent pity.

A young gentleman whom he had favoured and assisted by every means in his power, in an effort at making an independency at the Bar, having through quite another source obtained a Colonial appointment, complied with the usual conditions exacted from Irish candidates for office, by an attack upon Ireland—in particular upon my father.

“It was but natural that he should do so,” said the latter to some friends, who bitterly denounced the young man’s conduct: “did I not give —— *provocation? did I not do him a service?*”

In 1839, he received what *he* felt a severe blow indeed.

A gentleman of much respectability and general worth, had joined him with great heartiness in the political movement of that year,—the working of the “*Precursor Association*,” as it was called; being the last phase of the Irish popular movement, ere deciding irrevocably upon the demand for Repeal.

During several months the gentleman in question had worked cordially and heartily in the committees and at the general meetings of this body; and being a large employer of labour, he *gained* and *gave* popularity by such attendance. There had always been a friendly acquaintance between him and my father; and this now rapidly ripened into a warm and intimate friendship.

On one afternoon, when they had been a long time engaged together in committee business, at the Corn Exchange,—the head-quarters then, as now, of Agitation,—they walked arm in arm, and in confidential, or at least very friendly conversation, towards Mr. O’Connell’s residence in Merrion Square. Arriving at the door, Mr. O’Connell earnestly pressed his friend to do as he had readily done on some previous occasions,

namely, to come in to a family dinner. The other excused himself; and they parted at the door as friends part, who expect to meet next day.

Mr. O'Connell entered his study, and seeing the early edition of the Dublin Evening Post upon his table, took it up to read while waiting the summons to dinner. To his utter amazement, he found in conspicuous type in its columns a letter, from the friend whose grasp was yet warm on his hand, accusing him, in nearly so many words, of turning a political movement to his own advantage in a pecuniary point of view—in short, of *peculation* under the garb of patriotism!

Something like an hour had elapsed since the breaking of this thunder-clap upon him, when the member of his family who had been with him at the moment returned to announce the serving of dinner. He found him as he had left him, with the newspaper hanging from his hand, not a limb changed from its position; his eye mournfully fixed—in no unconsciousness, but in the deep, mute agony of a wounded heart.

The sequel of this wretched incident was worthy of its beginning. The *plunge* being once made, no depth seemed too great; and credence

was absolutely refused by the accuser, or, at any rate, by some one for him, to my father's simple exposition of facts, unless the accounts should be subjected to rigid examination. This condition was granted; and the books containing every detail of the financial transactions of the Precursor Association were submitted for the fullest inspection of the accusing party, who had engaged for the occasion a city magistrate and a *bookbinder*, as his aide-de-camps. The use to which the latter individual was put, was, to examine *whether there had not been a fraudulent insertion of new leaves* into the cash-book, for the purpose of concealing Mr. O'Connell's speculation!!!

There yet remains to be told one more and final instance of the effect upon my father of the unkindness and desertion of friends; but that will more properly come in when discussing the events of 1846-1847.

In this session the faults of the system of trial of election petitions became glaringly apparent, without any better substitute having suggested itself, or having been devised to this day.

The custom then was to clear the House of strangers, all but the counsel and agents for the

parties, and lock the doors. The clerk then put into glasses on the table, slips of paper with the names of all the members of the House upon them; and after a few formalities, and the more practical preliminary of a *good shake*, proceeded to draw them out one by one, announcing the name as he opened the billet.

The first thirty-three members who answered to their names thus drawn, constituted the rough panel of the intended committee. The counsel and agents for sitting member and petitioner, with a few *amici curiæ* from Treasury bench and the chief bench of the Opposition, retired then to deliberate upon the panel thus obtained; and after each party had separately marked off eleven of the thirty-three names as persons to be challenged, both met to communicate the result of the separate deliberations, and settle the ultimate *eleven* who were to be the committee.

During the calling by the clerk, the utmost silence reigned: less enforced, however, by the rule of the House, and the vigilance of the worthy Sergeant-at-Arms, than by the universal anxiety. The chances of this election-ballot were as singular and as capricious as those of any other

species of gambling. Sometimes there would be a run of names belonging to one party ; sometimes of those of its opponents. Again, some individuals were sure to be called in every ballot of a session ; while the names of others seldom or never turned up.

According as these chances went in favour of one or the other party, very audible expressions of pleasure and displeasure respectively were to be heard along the crowded benches. But there used to be a positive *explosion*, on the one side of wrath, and on the other of triumph, when through negligence, or accident, the individuals called upon did not happen to be present ; and thus lost to their friends the advantage which the chances of the ballot had for a moment appeared to give them.

When the rough panel was at length obtained—a result often delayed for a considerable time by the absence of some, and the *swearing off* of others—(that is to say, the taking of an oath by members who were past sixty years of age, that they *had* arrived at that period of life, and did not consider themselves capable of the labour of attendance)—an interchange of congratulations was

most plainly visible and audible among those whose partisans stood in a majority on the list, while a corresponding crestfallenness was exhibited by those whose hopes had been defeated.

In short, the question as to the success or failure of the petition seemed as though considered *settled*; without any thought of, or any degree of reference to the merits of the case, the value of counsel's argument, and the obligations of the members' oaths.

The calculation seemed to be somewhat in this way:—

“ Out of the thirty-three in the gross panel, so many of *our side* have answered that we *must* have the majority on the reduced list. THEREFORE *our man* (petitioner or sitting member, as the case happened to be) *MUST succeed!* ”

Undoubtedly all this smoke could not have been without fire; and there must accordingly have been decisions, which a full and cool recollection of the heavy bond of their oath would not have justified in those who made them. But the worst effect was, that a suspicion was thus thrown upon *all* decisions, and a licence inevitably given to calumny, bitterness, and all uncharitableness, which aggravated to the uttermost the fever of

political hate, that raged not only throughout this session, but for a long time after, and *out* of the House as well as in it.

It was a rather *plain spoken* exposition and denunciation of the dangers, evils, and occasional enormities incident to this system, which gave occasion to the grand scene of a solemn reprimand (!) of one of the members of the House by the Speaker.

The offender in this instance was Daniel O'Connell. At a public meeting in Ireland, or in a public letter, he had strongly denounced the manner in which the deliberate and well ascertained choice of important constituencies was often set at nought by Committee decisions flagrantly irreconcilable with a due observance of that judicial impartiality to which the individuals composing those Committees were sworn at the table of the House.

This proceeding of his afforded an opportunity for attack on him, not to be neglected by a party to which he was so long and so bitterly obnoxious, and, accordingly, some of the hotter spirits at the Conservative side of the House took upon themselves the office of champions of the injured

and interesting innocence of its Election Committees.

A magniloquent indictment, full of "noble rage" and indignant sympathy with the objects of his denunciation, was therefore most carefully hatched and brought forth to light with all due pomp and ceremony. The whole well-disciplined and eager array of the Opposition were punctually present, and personal antipathies coming into play, several of the Whig party lent the aid of their votes to the division, which decided, that Daniel O'Connell, one of the representatives for the city of Dublin, had grievously transgressed in the premises stated in the indictment, and merited and should receive the severest reprimand of the Chair!

The form in such cases made and provided is, that the delinquent member, being "*named*" by the Speaker, shall stand up in his place, (bare-headed, of course,) and abide *the scolding* that he has been doomed to undergo.

Mr. O'Connell stood up amid the triumphant cheers and *jeers* of his accusers and their abettors of every hue and section of the assembly. Mr. Speaker bent on him the awful terrors of his brow, and "targed him tightly," in good round

terms; concluding with the usual formula of rather superfluous information:

“ You are hereby reprimanded accordingly ! ”

Mr. O'Connell replied by challenging investigation *or denial* of the imputations he had thrown out. He denied the justice of condemning him without inquiry as to the truth or falsity of the accusations for which he was thus summarily chastised.

He pointed out the inconsistency of attacking an individual for what multitudes of others were allowed to do with impunity: an indulgence that could be attributable only to a sense of the justice of the allegations.

A pamphleteer of the preceding year—himself a “Parliamentary Agent,” as the solicitors accustomed to parliamentary practice designate themselves—had gone into a full and accurate detail of the miserable canvassing for attendance at the election ballots, and of all the various “dodges” resorted to, to make the Committees “*safe*!” He had concluded with these words:

“ Thus, *to ensure a favourable Committee every principle of decency and justice is notoriously and openly prostituted!!* ”

And yet this pamphlet had not been prosecuted!

Mr. O'Connell concluded :

“ If you will appoint a Committee, and that they shall decide that I have made a false charge, there is no submission too humble to be bowed to by me. If they say I have misstated facts, there is no reparation which I shall not be ready to make

“ I have repented of nothing. I have retracted nothing. I repeat what I have said : I only wish I could find terms less offensive in themselves and equally significant. I am bound to re-assert what I have said : for I am convinced of *nothing by a vote!* ”

There was, of course, a terrible outcry at this “ *malignancy*, ” and the whole business would doubtless have had to be done over again—indictment, defence, reprimand and all—had not so many other members started up and expressed in pretty unequivocal terms their coincidence with Mr. O'Connell's view of the case, that still greater ridicule would have fallen upon the elaborate process by which so doubtful a vindication of decisions which, in spite of all the efforts of party,

were held by the public mind to be *very* doubtful in themselves, was to be effected.

And there was practically a distinct confession of the truth of the charges against Election Committees, as they had been constituted, by the entire change which, a very few years later, was made in the constitution of those bodies.

This change, under the provisions of which all doubtful election issues have now for two parliaments been tried, originated with Sir Robert Peel, and undoubtedly is some, though not a very great improvement.

There is no fault with the right honourable baronet that the improvement should not have been thorough and sufficient. The House is, with a good deal of sound reason, jealous even of the appearance of an encroachment upon its privileges; and at that period, certainly, it would have been, and in all likelihood would to a great extent still be found, a very difficult task to obtain general consent to a larger and therefore more efficient change.

Nothing could have been worse, according to the unanimous admission at this time of day of all who had practical experience of it, than the old

system, with its levity of oath-taking, its canvassings for partisan attendances, its industrious *whipping-in* to an election-ballot as earnestly and calculatingly as to a division after a debate; its fluctuations of triumph and dismay, according as the names of friends or of opponents chanced to prevail; and, finally, the really indecent confidence with which the result of the Committee's labours was predicted,—exultingly on the one hand, and despondingly on the other,—merely from the known political bias of those who happened to have answered to the *appel nominal*.

But through all the up-stairs and star-chamber complexity of the present mode of making out election-panels, symptoms of the unsubdued inveteracy of the old evils still make themselves evident.

And the plain, practical, tangible absurdity is as great and as glaring as ever—that of entrusting to men utterly unskilled in the law the absolute and uncontrolled decision of matters frequently involving very nice legal points; to say nothing of their equally absolute licence in dealing with the facts of the cases before them, according as their party bias may happen to incline.

The suggestion of appointing, from amongst the leading men at the bar, certain judicial assessors to preside over the inquiries now conducted by Election Committees, with a jury composed of members of parliament, selected according to the present or any fairer mode that can be devised, appears to offer the means of arriving at as fair a tribunal as can be constituted without too great a surrender of the jealously-guarded dignity and powers of the House of Commons.

The M. P. jury would have to take their *law* from the qualified and competent instructor on the bench, and not from the vagaries of their own fancies and prejudices, as has occurred unfortunately too often under the present system, which makes them judges and jurymen at one and the same time.

And the experience gathered in the ordinary and regular courts, in the course of a long practice, would secure to them in the assessor an able and most necessary guide in the elucidation and arrangement of the *facts* of the case, as well as in the *law*.

The only parties likely to suffer if something like this plan were adopted, would be that portion

of the parliamentary lawyers who seek to build their reputation on their cleverness in mystifying, wheedling, or bullying a Committee. And the change would be beneficial even to them; for nothing so spoils a professional man for ordinary and regular business, as the extreme licence taken and allowed in pleading and conducting a case before so motley and uncertain a tribunal as that of a Parliamentary Committee; whether one of election inquiry or otherwise.

Lord Stanley was in the *transition-stage* in this parliament; not yet a declared Tory, but decidedly no longer a Whig. Sitting with his *fidus-achates*, Sir James Graham, and some three or four of the crotchettiest men in the House about them, on one of the benches below the gangway on the ministerial side of the House; he and they were known collectively by the *sobriquet* of "the Derby Dilly;" one bestowed upon them with great success by my father, in reference to Stanley's own phrase the preceding session, of the "upsetting of the ministerial coach."

The *Derby Dilly*, with its *six insides*, trundled along at its own eccentric pace, and on its own eccentric line of route, through this session and

the next; swaying more and more to the Conservative side of the way, until, at the beginning of the parliament of 1847, it fairly ran off the road altogether, and transferred its passengers to the capacious old Tory vehicle, then fast coming up with its Whig rival.

The only man of ability belonging to the celebrated "Derby Dilly," (excepting, of course, its gifted, but erratic driver,) was Sir James Graham.

In no case is there so striking an instance of the harm that vacillation, as contradistinguished from seasonable change of opinion, does to a public man, as in the case of Sir James Graham.

No man can deny that he is rising in public estimation of late years in a manner far more proportioned to his intellectual endowments and powers than during all the preceding portion of his career. The simple explanation of the mystery lies in this, that of late years his political opinions have become steadier, if not very much more defined.

Beginning life with a strong tendency to Radicalism, "*and something more,*" he passed through all the changes of extreme, moderate, and at last Conservative Whiggery, with more or less delay

at each stage, until he ultimately settled down into the measured, calculating, and (to use a *roundabout* epithet,) the *rationaly impressionable* Toryism of Sir Robert Peel.

Having thus at last "got his course," as the sailors say, and a good pilot at the "con," Sir James Graham's mind has been freed from the crippling and embarrassing uncertainties that marred its full powers; and he has accordingly *come out* with an effect that the utmost efforts of his talents, eminent as they have always been considered, had failed to produce at any previous time; and has permanently established his reputation as a singularly clear-headed, efficient, pleasing, and even statesmanlike speaker.

Nothing ever more redounded to his credit, or could have done so, than his manly confession of wrong: when, during the Irish discussion of 1845, he retracted and expressed his regret for having given utterance to the injudicious declaration that he had been betrayed into in the year 1843, to the effect that "concession to Ireland had reached its limits," and that severity rather than indulgence should thenceforth be her lot.

His partnership in Sir Robert Peel's professed

and *practically carried-out* recantation of opinion on the Corn Laws, evidenced the same spirit of honourable reparation of error as regarded England.

And if the time was then denied to him, as to Sir Robert Peel, to give practical and tangible effect to their *Irish* retractions as to their English; and again, if the opportunity of so doing has been denied to them since, by the disastrous *faineance* of their successors in office; let us hope that the approaching session will see those opportunities given and turned to their due and full account: whatever be the chances of ministries, and with whomsoever is to rest the credit and the glory of having originated the long promised and sorely wanted measures of rightful concession, and large and real benefit to Ireland.

Another member of the *Derby Dilly*, Sir Francis Burdett, (*Old Glory*, as Cobbett used to call him,) made in the session of 1835 a recantation of a very different description.

He had been injudicious, extravagant, and somewhat reckless, when advocating popular principles in the prime of his days. He was equally injudicious and extravagant in the opposite cause,

now, when his way of life had not only fallen into "the sere and yellow leaf," but had gone beyond, and was verging into anile dotage.

He swallowed all his old liberal pledges ; forgot his high-flown theories ; and adopted as trashy a twaddle of Toryism as ever he had protested against and ridiculed, *callidâ juventû*.

As in times of Cholera all virulent diseases of other kinds are apt ultimately to assume the type of the chief epidemic ; so the various bitternesses that were, month after month, and week after week, breaking up the once great "Reform party," all tended to one uniform development—that of the frequent *moral* epidemic—or, (to describe it more correctly) the lasting moral *endemic* to which English minds are subject—that of a disposition to be severe and harsh towards Ireland.

Poor Sir Francis Burdett exemplified this in his assaults upon her, and upon her representatives, for her offences and their own ; in particular against Daniel O'Connell, who first felt the effects of his fury, in the not very worthy nor creditable attempt at expulsion from Brookes' Club.

In the heyday of enthusiasm in his new cause, Sir Francis flung down the gauntlet to his old

friends, the Westminster Radicals, by suddenly resigning his seat, and standing again for Westminster, on unmistakeable Conservative principles. As it was the height of the session, and of the season when he did so, the excitement and interest were extreme. All London banded itself on one side or the other; the committee rooms and polling booths were crowded with members of Parliament, doing the most minute and laborious duties as agents; and the unfortunate electors were besieged in their own shops and houses by lady-customers in their carriages, vowing, promising, and threatening a world of wonders to secure their votes. This was a game in which the superior wealth of the Conservatives gave them the advantage; and therefore the whilome patriot-turned-Tory obtained his re-election.

The summer and much of the autumn wore away in bitter party squabbles, and little fruit to the people of the United Kingdom. At length, as all things must come to an end, the session terminated, and our respective leaders gave us all permission to fly away to our homes,

“Like a bird that seeketh the mother’s nest.”

No school-boy ever did, could, or will enjoy more the day when "Vacation" opens to him all its pleasures, than does the unfortunate member of Parliament, the happy hour when the business of the session is fairly over, and he is free to go home.

If he be a mere party-man, he rejoices that he is no longer likely "to be wanted"—no longer to be in fear of "urgent requests to attend," black looks at occasional absences, &c. &c.

If an *independent* member—in *fact* or *in fiction*—he has no longer his thankless pains of constant attendances to undergo; and occasionally the rebukes of his judgment, or mayhap of his conscience: if such an article be not contraband in an M.P.

And whether ministerialist or oppositionist, waiter upon Providence or independent, he rejoiceth much at being delivered from the dull detail of parliamentary life common to all. No more wearisome drawling dull debates, protracted from hour to hour of a long evening of impatient expectation; only to be adjourned at two in the morning for yet another dreary night of bootless talk. No more Committees, absorbing the few

hours that intervene between his fevered sleep and the recommencement of the nightly suffering; and no more day-sittings — worse, more wearisome, stupifying, depressing, and wasting, than even the dismal drudgery of a Railway Committee!

No more scribbling of orders for the gallery, and occasional smuggling in of supernumerary friends. No more hasty and ill-digested chops at Bellamy's, or interrupted dinners at this or the other Club. No more ruined domestic comfort for the elders; no more spoiled amusements for the juniors; no more *bother*, hurry, and inconvenience for all!

I had almost said, (and, therefore, almost made a sad mistake by saying,) “no more beseeching letters,” praying for your influence to get all kinds of places: none too high for your earnest correspondents’ ambition—none too low for their wants! And all, all, without exception, “perfectly suited to the supplicants’ abilities!!”

But this is a perennial affliction—not one merely of the session; and none are exempt from it, not even those who are known to stand due north of Government favour. Their lot how-

ever is happy, compared with that of the recognised ministerial supporter, who has fifty times a-day to give the assurance that “*one word from him to Lord John*” will not make the fortunes of his clients!

CHAPTER IX.

APPLICATIONS FOR PLACES—A FEW SPECIMENS.—FRANKING LETTERS.
—IRISH ADDRESSES.—FAIR PLAY.—THE ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS—
THEY ALL PERSECUTE IRELAND—MANY OF THE WRITERS, IRISHMEN.
—A POETICAL EPISTLE FROM THE DUBLIN UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE.—
BREACH OF PRIVILEGE.—IRISHMEN AGAINST IRELAND.—CLEARING
THE HOUSE.—A MAIDEN SPEECH—NEWSPAPER REPORTS THEREOF.—
AN AGREEABLE PUBLICITY.—RISING OF PARLIAMENT.—MR. DANIEL
O'CONNELL.—HIS LIFE AT DARRYNANE.

WHATEVER may be the experience in the premises of other members of Parliament, the applications for recommendation to places, or other advancement of the writers' views, which have from time to time been addressed to my father, and those of his family who happened to be in Parliament, could scarcely be outdone in point of *oddity* as well as in multitude.

Some such requisitions as the following (amongst many, many others of equal or perhaps superior *queerness*,) have come to hand from time to time:—

“ DEAR SIR,—

“ I shall be greatly obliged if you will procure me a situation in the Excise, Customs, Stamps, Post-office, Ordnance Department, or any other that may be most convenient. Of course I should wish it to be a respectable one, and can confidently assure you, that you never shall have reason to regret your recommendation; as I shall do credit to your choice by my diligence and faithfulness in the discharge of my duties.

“ You may not perhaps at once recollect my name; but I can recall myself very speedily to your remembrance by a circumstance which took place between us about twenty years ago, or thereabouts.

“ *I rented from you a house in ——— Street in Dublin, and when I was leaving it, you kindly forgave me half-a-year's rent.* THEREFORE [!] I trust I may expect from you the kindness which I at present solicit,

“ And I have, &c. &c. &c. &c.

“ P.S.—*One word from you to ———, would, I am sure, obtain for me all that I want !*”

“ MY DEAR SIR,—

“ Having lately been very unfortunate in my business, I am about to wind up my affairs, and retire with whatever means I have remaining. Being still strong and in good health, I do not wish to be idle; nor could I very well support my family, which is very large, and three of my sons grown up.

“ I will therefore be for ever indebted, if you will be kind enough to exert your influence to get me made a Stipendary Magistrate, or to get me some situation,—I entirely leave it to your own choice as to the nature of it,—which may be worth £350 or £450 a-year, as less would not well do in my present circumstances.

“ ONE WORD *from you* to the Chief Secretary, or to ———, would do the thing at once!

“ I beg to add that my sons are, all three, of ages quite sufficient to ensure that they are competent to any Government employment that you could get for them. Places of £100 or £150 a-year would suit them very well for the present,”
&c. &c. &c.

“ GREAT LIBERATOR AND FATHER OF YOUR
COUNTRY,—

“ I am sure you will look with forgiveness upon a poor distressed Irishman writing to you again; for whom your honour wrote a letter before—more glory to you! I sent in the recommendation, and as your honour’s servant bid me, I left my *nome* [*name*] and address, and *i* never got an answer, but I went on this day and the *clark* told me you was the person to get the answer. He would not tell me what the answer was, but come to you, and that you knew it. So I do expect from your honour to let me know it, or send me another letter for the Commissioners to Great Scotland Yard to get me on, for I *know you can easily do it*. You would bring or you could bring me from the *gallos* [*gallows*]*—little owing* [*let alone*] to get me into the Police. I am now badly *of*, doing nothing, and you know that is a bad way to live in London; so I hope you will *stick me in* as soon as you can, *and that will be in three days’ time*. I beg your honour’s pardon for using all this freedom. I presume, Sir, to be your humble servant, &c. &c.

“ *N.B.*—I am that man who was recommended by Mr. ———, Esq., of ———, Killarney.”

“ BELOVED LIBERATOR,—

“ As you have always had a great liking for fine young Irishmen, I write to you to ask your powerful influence to help one in his manly aspirations and views, and not let him sink at home into paltry dependency.

“ I am past twenty-one years of age, six feet one in height, and can play at the cudgels with any man in the barony, or, for that matter, the county. I know also the broad-sword exercise, and I have learned fencing, and can jump over *any height*, and vault over a horse and *he saddled and all!*

“ As *you have a son in the Russian service* [!!!]—perhaps you could tell me how I could get *into the French, or Austrian, or the Russian service itself*; and your son would give me a letter to a general there, that would get me on, and get me made an officer at once; for I am tired of being here at home, and I'd have no chance of getting promotion if I went into the Police, in regard of my being a Catholic,” &c. &c. &c.

And so on *multis cum aliis*, and indeed *ad infinitum*.

In the scope of their "large ambition," these multitudinous claimants stopped at nothing. Nothing was too high or too low to forbid candidature, and vacancies of all kinds were watched with lynx-eyed vigilance, and applied for ere the previous occupant could well be said to have departed this life, or his office. And whatever might be the nature of the claim, the description of the object, and the position of the applicant, there was sure to be one unvarying *refrain*, viz.—

"One word from you would get me the place at once," or, "would do all I want," &c. &c.

This alone made such applications a source to my father of continual distress and annoyance; and no explanation, remonstrance, or assurance from him, as to his inability to make or succeed in recommendations for places, met with the least credit whatever.

Generally speaking, nothing is more true than what is said of the consequences to themselves of Members of Parliament being in a position to recommend persons for Government employment, viz. that by such recommendation, if *successful*, they make enemies of all the defeated candidates, and get no gratitude from their *protégé*. Happy

the man who is in Opposition, and who can meet all requisitions with the incontestible fact, that he is out of favour with the Minister!

But the labour of perusing, attending to, and disposing of requisitions, was as nothing compared to that of deciphering and copying the addresses of letters sent to be franked, while that most troublesome and annoying privilege remained with members.

It would have been thought that at my father's London residence, where three or four members of Parliament (himself and sons) were constantly to be found, letters sent to be franked could easily have been disposed of. But *diis aliter visum*—there was an over-proportionate demand even for the supply; and after we had exhausted ourselves in the thankless office of giving at least thirty-five out of the *forty franks* at our command, there still would remain a heap of unsatisfied claims. These, by daily accumulation, frequently became hundreds in number, before a chance departure from town of one or the other of our party enabled us to reduce the arrear by charging him with as many as he could possibly carry; to be franked and posted in batches, at each suc-

cessive twenty or thirty miles of his journey, the Post-office regulations allowing of this Promethean restoration of his close-eaten privilege at such intervals.

Such addresses as these were common:—

“PATRICK NEALE,

(*of Moyerta,*)

care of Mr. ———, &c. &c. &c. at Sligo,
for Biddy Doherty, Ballina.”

“PADDY FLANNERTY, at Mr. John Conner’s,
General Post Office, 15 miles N.W. of Cork.”

“TIM RYAN, England.” [!!]

Again:—

“Under the care of Mr. ———, of Kil and
Kilmonaghan.

“For TIMOTHY DALY,

who departed this life,

For his wife, HONOR DALY,
Kilbeggan, Ireland.”

In making reference to petty difficulties and annoyances attached to the position of Irish members, an opportunity suggests itself for allusion to a difficulty and disadvantage of greater weight and magnitude in ordinary estimation, and to

which they are unintermittingly subjected—viz. the attacks of the English press.

Englishmen boast of their love of fair play ; and no doubt conceive they have reason in so doing. But, whatever may be their claim to it in other cases, it is certain that in dealing with Ireland and Irish matters they are as little extravagant of it as need be. As it is a good thing, they like to keep it all to themselves, and have none to spare for anybody else.

The more illiberal and bigoted against Ireland and Irishmen that a newspaper or other publication can be, the more sure it is of success ; and so far does this go, that even where there is the *inclination* to be just, and to allow *both* sides to be heard on an Irish question, the newspaper managers *dare not* indulge the inclination, for fear of displeasing their readers by troubling them with any but the received and stereotyped opinions as to the “indolent, puzzle-headed, turbulent, and unmanageable Irish !”

For sixteen years now that the Irish popular representatives have been in any number in Parliament, the whole, or nearly the whole power of the English press has been directed against them and

their country—vilifying, ridiculing, and scoffing at both one and the other; or, what is far more intolerable, affecting a patronising and compassionate tone in their criticisms and comments.

I know all the penalties incurred by talking thus freely and plainly of the press. I am quite aware of the consequences of vexing the “*irritable genus*” of the broad-sheet, who never admit the possibility of their being in the wrong, and never forget or forgive the gentlest hint to that effect.

“*Il n’y que nous qui ont toujours raison!*” is their motto, and woe betide the unlucky wight, not himself of the craft, who shall attempt to dispute it! With the exception of the judges in Ireland, whom the support and observance of English public opinion have so very frequently made regardless of that prevailing in the country whose laws they administer, (*and whose laws they not unfrequently make*), there are none so despotic and high-handed in their despotism, as proprietors of newspapers, whether in the aggregate or the individual. At once shielded and armed with the great “WE” of the press, they issue forth to battle with the double advantage of being able to

strike their enemy (where he is not of their own order and calling) many times for once that he can return the blow, and of having the means of preventing his defence from coming fairly before the public.

If this be so where both the combatants are English, making appeal to a public of their own nation, and, therefore, a public not without some sympathies for either, how much more is it not the case when the weaker party is *IRISH*, and the stronger *English*, with all the additional disadvantages to the former of English prejudice and international dislikings. Then is the Irishman like unto—

“ Feather-bed ’twixt castle wall
And heavy brunt of cannon-ball ! ”

and, to borrow the Examiner’s old quotation from De Foe, war is made upon him *à la mode le pais de Pole!*

Can it be greatly wondered at that the Irish representative should not be *over fond* of his compelled attendance in the English Parliament, when, if he endeavour at all earnestly to discharge his duty towards his constituents and country, he

must make up his mind to experience and endure every species of assault and contumely in the House at night, and in the columns of the press in the morning; in addition to the other *agréments* of his position, viz. of having a weary land journey and a stormy channel between him and his home, his family, and his ordinary occupations and affairs?

The tone and manner of the attack may vary, but the substance is ever the same. Whether in the brickbat and bludgeon style of the Times, the dulled and clouded sarcasm of the fading Examiner, the uncompromising and heartless harshness of the Morning Chronicle, the inveterate virulence of the Post and Standard, the same diluted with twaddle in the mopping and mowing Morning Herald, the official impertinence of the Observer and Globe, the Mungo-Malagrowthierism of the Spectator, the pandering to anti-Irish prejudice and bigotry of the half-Radical, half-Tory Economist—the *matter* is still the same—dislike, ridicule, and contempt for Irishmen and Irish things; and evidences of a disposition, more or less developed, and more or less self-acknowledged, to consider Ireland but as a conquered and mutinous province, and not as an important

member of the confederacy that gives name and being to the British Empire.

The Daily News and the Sun are nearly, if not altogether alone, in moderation of language, and consideration of bearing towards Ireland. True, there *are* times when the prevailing fever carries even them away; and Irishmen and their country must only bend the back for the blow in humble submission. But often a redeeming, a truly liberal and manly article, shines out in either paper; all the more valuable and welcome from the powerful contrast with the tone and matter of the scribblings of their coteremporaries.

There is a class of small, self-conceited, pragmatical, and *dogmatic* barristers, haunting the Clubs, (not by any means excluding the Reform Club,) who are said to wield the thunderbolts of the leading press in the tempest of *Anglo-Saxon* wrath continually hurtling over the heads of the *incorrigible Celts* of Ireland. I never meet with one of those men that I do not feel impelled to doff my hat, and—

“—— speak in bondsman's key,
With 'bated breath and whispering humbleness,”

before the creature who virtually rules unhappy

Ireland by the excitement which the congenial tone of his scribblings infuses into the heavy mass of prejudice against us in the minds of our English fellow-subjects.

What should be the right understanding (and practice) of their mission by the journalists of England?

To remove, and not to foster, prejudices:—to enlighten, and not to cast farther darkness around:—to conciliate the two people; not “set roaring war” between them;—or that worse than actual war,—the bitter deadly feeling of international hostility, fomented on the one side by the intolerant pride of triumph and superior strength, the love of domination, and the consciousness of having inflicted suffering and wrong;—and on the other, by the deep and rankling sense of old, and long, and accumulating injustice, oppression, contumely, and hate!

Once the Examiner did recognise as worthy of its proprietor's talent such a mission as this. Personal animosities, and the revival in advancing years of early prejudices, which the noon-day strength of intellect for a time controlled, have unhappily occasioned an entire change of course.

Even the Times at rare moments has spoken like an oracle, of what might be done to remove for ever old bitternesses, and bind the nations together in the only secure and permanent connexion—that of conciliated feeling, and perfect equality of rights and privileges.

The Morning Chronicle, while under other guidance than the present—and yet only for a portion of the time that it was so; the Spectator, before its *whey* of human kindness became utterly and hopelessly curdled and soured; and some also of the other weekly papers,—as the *pope and priest-hunting* Sunday Times, the Weekly Chronicle, the Nonconformist, the Atlas, the Standard of Freedom, Jerrold's paper, &c., all these have from time to time allowed themselves to be moved by a better spirit, and have emitted worthy and statesmanlike opinions as to the treatment of Ireland.

Would that they might only have the courage to persevere in the good dispositions that they thus occasionally exhibit! But to do so requires a very high degree—perhaps too high a degree—of courage, under the circumstances that surround them. The English newspaper reading class are

not remarkable for tolerance of anything which at all comes into collision with the prejudices amongst which they have been cradled and nursed—prejudices imbibed with the mother's milk, nourished and enforced by the sayings and opinions of the attendants of their childhood, woven into the very story-books that are given to them, and afterwards confirmed and established by the precepts of those entrusted with their education, and by the gross perversion of facts, and narrow and uncandid judgments of events and of characters, by the writers of the histories and books of general information they are called upon to peruse. The bigotries and intolerances thus rife and rampant among them *must* be regarded and paid deference to, under penalty of *loss of custom*.

One morning paper, the Morning Advertiser, which has been accidentally omitted in the foregoing catalogue and commentary, frequently and forcibly displays the pressure of this necessity, by its ever-shifting variety of moods, and frequent alternations of reasonable and reckless articles.

Without meaning to allude to the writers of any one of the just-mentioned newspapers, in particular, (or indeed, specially to any paper whether

mentioned or not,) there is, unhappily, occasion and solid ground for the remark, that those of the English press, who write the articles that are of the bitterest tendency against poor Ireland, and manifest the most miserable and money-loving obsequiousness to English prejudice and passion, are generally Irishmen themselves!

In every oppressed and divided country, instances are sure to be found of this sordid recreancy; and therefore no argument should be based upon it (as is sometimes attempted to be done) against the *Irish* character in particular. Amongst wealthy and prosperous nations, as in wretched Ireland, individuals will ever be found, who readily barter away for lucre all that ought to be dear to them; and care nothing at all for country, friends, or creed, in comparison with the hopes of pecuniary advantage.

In the heat and bitterness of natural and very warrantable indignation at the repeated and flagrant instances which we are condemned to witness, and in the excusable feeling to which they give occasion, of at least a *temporary* despondency as to the fortunes of a country whose own children thus assail her, there is often a disposition to jump

at conclusions unfavourable to our national character. But this is an error almost as grave, though not so malicious nor deliberate, as any committed by the objects of our indignation.

Of these recreant Irishmen, there are two classes. The first belong to the old bitter Orange faction in Ireland; whose petty and unworthy interest, and therefore whose aim and effort it is, to misrepresent and calumniate their country and countrymen; and having thus hoodwinked John Bull, to lead him to play such pranks with poor Ireland as might make angels weep, and well might make fiends rejoice.

To this potent *generic* motive there is super-added the special and particular necessity of earning bread; and the shortest and readiest way to that object is by encouraging, flattering, and affecting to adopt the favourite prejudices of their English readers, viz. their prejudices on Irish matters.

The other class are also poor adventurers: there have only that sorry excuse for doing dirty work. Allied in race, religion and traditions with the people whom they revile, they seek as it were to stun the feelings of self-reproach by an over-

acted earnestness of attack, that betrays itself, even while it gratifies the unworthy feelings to which it makes appeal.

A poetic epistle, rivalling Horace or Juvenal in power and pungency of expression, and imbued with deep sentiment of nationality, has lately appeared in the pages of the Dublin University Magazine, directed mainly against the *anti-Irish Irishmen*, who bring shame and degradation upon their country by the prostitution of their talents in London. I cannot refrain from quoting from it the following striking lines: a fair specimen of the vigour, singular ability, and high and profound feeling that so markedly characterize the whole:—

“ See where the ribald pages’ affluent spleen,
 Spreading, pollutes the putrid magazine
 With mix’d obscenity and scurril jest,
 And home-contempts, to give the whole a zest;
 Whose pen portrays the shameful caricature?
 Some Irish vagabond’s you may be sure,
 Who, from intrusive acolytes or bums,
 Flying, subsists by picking coal-hole crumbs,
 Or giving sittings, at so much per day,
 As Mulligan, to Mr. Thackeray
 (For who would now his vulgar serial plan
 Without its regulation-Irishman ?);
 Such sponsors must we for our sins endure
 In legislation and in literature.
 Or where at char for coterie and club,
 The mother of the muses’ laundry tub,

Fresh from the literary steep wrings out
(As Irish washerwoman wrings a clout)
'Mavourneen' scullions, till the kitchen melts,
And all the 'acushla,' catalogue of Celts ;
'Tis Irish all, the 'dudeens' and the 'duds,'
Irish the soap, and sycophantic suds.
Nor only is the parasitic part
In letters play'd. It scandalizes art ;
Oh, shut the book—on sheets degraded cease
To trace the shame and genius of Maclise :
Turn from the scoffing page your saddened eyes,
Where taste and feeling make self-sacrifice,
And meagre Teague presents his rugged foil,
To the smooth Briton, in the sketch of Doyle :
Doyle, whose fine pencil, generously applied,
Moves free as beauty in her virgin pride ;
Put to home-mockings at detraction's suit,
Stumbles and shrinks, a conscious prostitute.
Ah, youths, before the gifted hand you lift,
To strike your Mother, think who gave the gift ;
Nor scorn the land, though poor she be, and far,
That nursed the genius makes you what you are.
Far better ere to crime like this it come,
Live all your days in Dublin here at home ;
Your lives and virtues, as your works approved,
Like Burton, self-respecting and beloved ;
Or, though one sordid act might wealth secure,
Like patriot —— honourably poor.
Still, howsoe'er the sycophantic trade
Profane the pencil, or the pen degrade,
At least the Irish chisel shall be known
In noble and in lovely forms alone ;
Thanks, Hogan—thanks, MacDowell ; Foley, thine,
Be all the grateful Graces' thanks, and mine ;
Yes-- Irish all the men who chiefly mar
Poor Ireland's pleadings at Great Britain's bar ;
The anti-Irish press, an Irish host
Itself, SUN, STANDARD, HERALD, MORNING POST—
In fine, who, with seditious dirt, begrimes

Poor Ireland in the leaders of the TIMES ;
Up-closes, with the prompt diurnal lie,
The opening hand of English charity ;
Gloats o'er our crimes, and laughs our woes to scorn ?
A servile Irish scoundrel bred and born."

If, from the various causes that have been before enumerated, the Irish representatives are not to expect mercy or fair treatment from the *article-mongers* and "special correspondents" of the English newspapers, the simple fact of their being in bad odour with the English public is enough to deprive them of any chance of favour at the hands of the Fourth Estate, the reporters of those papers. And the experience of this additional disadvantage is by no means confined to the *popular* Irish members alone, but extends to all, whenever an Irish subject comes before the House.

In the session of 1833, a curious scene arose out of a difficulty created by this neglect and contemptuous treatment of Irish members.

A speech of Mr. O'Connell's, upon an Irish question of considerable interest and importance, was not only grievously abbreviated, but the sense of it entirely perverted in several passages. As I recollect, it was a speech on the then very exciting and difficult subject of the Tithes of the

Protestant Church in Ireland; and Mr. O'Connell among other things was made to say, that he would vote in a certain way on the immediate point under consideration, "although it was directly in the teeth of all his former opinions on the subject!!" On his bringing the matter before the House, under the usual form of a "Breach of Privilege," and making complaint of being thus treated, the defence set up by the Reporter was, that during his walk from the House to the Newspaper-office, *the rain*, which was falling heavily at the [time, had most unfortunately streamed into his pocket, and *washed out the notes he had made of Mr. O'Connell's speech.*

Upon which the latter remarked, that it was the most extraordinary shower of rain he had ever heard of; inasmuch as it had not only *washed out* the speech he *did make*, but had *washed in* another and an entirely different one.

Having spoken with some severity upon this as well as upon other instances of neglect shown to him, the Reporters retorted, by a resolution not to report another word that he should choose to say. He was not a man to be put down quite so easily; and accordingly brought the matter again

before the House, with an intimation, that if the line of conduct adopted towards him were persevered in, he should require the nearly obsolete privilege of debating with closed doors to be called into action.

Several Members of Parliament took up the cudgels for the Reporters, and were rewarded for their trouble, by a declaration of the original offender, (the hero of the shower of rain,) to the effect, that he entertained a very low opinion indeed of the intellect, acquirements, and abilities of the vast majority of the House of Commons!

No species of concession or redress having been obtained, Mr. O'Connell, after undergoing three nights of *suppression of speech*, made the appeal he had threatened to the ancient rules and privileges of the House, and informed Mr. Speaker, that he "saw strangers in the gallery!"

"Strangers must withdraw!" was the brief, stern edict in reply, given forth *ore rotundo* by Mannors Sutton, then (1833) Speaker, in his own fine sonorous tones.

The Speaker in such cases has no option, but must, without suffering debate, or putting a question, order "strangers to withdraw." There is

not much of common sense about the reluctance which is manifested to do away with the old rule under which they are supposed not to be present at our deliberations, although fifty or sixty of them and upwards are nightly staring us in the face. If the power of clearing the House of all but members, and deliberating in secret, be at any time desirable,—and it is of course within the range of *possibilities* that some extreme occasion might arise to require it,—a short resolution can give it, either for the special occasion, or as a power to be vested in the Speaker for use by him on the first occurring emergency. The puerility of passing a sessional order which is every day flagrantly and openly violated, would thus be avoided, and plain common sense and matter of fact be substituted for the absurdity of the fiction which ignores the presence of those to whom the Speaker himself, as well as each individual member that pleases, gives written orders of admission to attend the debates.

Mr. O'Connell had no choice but to appeal to this old rule, or submit to be entirely *burked*: a precedent which, if once established in the case of so prominent a person in the House, would have

ever after been mercilessly imitated in the cases of members of less note and firmness.

It was a warm summer night when the magical words were pronounced, which at once proclaimed that the Speaker's eyes were suddenly opened wide to the gross violation of the House's orders, that had occurred by the corporeal and tangible presence of forty or fifty audacious strangers, and ordered their immediate expulsion! Like a set of children suddenly let out from confinement, the members spread themselves at once through the vacated benches, *under* and *in* the gallery, rejoicing greatly in the increased room and the comparative coolness thus obtained.

In truth there was a little of heroic virtue in our ever admitting strangers again, after the comfort we experienced on that night.

It is but fair now to record an instance where the Reporters gave entire satisfaction to an Irish member.

During one of the hot debates of ten years ago, or thereabouts, an amendment to the proposition then before the House was moved so unexpectedly that its originator was left for a moment without being seconded. An Irish M.P., a quiet going,

excellent country gentleman, who had never dreamed of opening his mouth, or taking any part in the House's proceedings beyond giving his vote, was suddenly stirred by the occasion to stand up and do the needed office.

Next day he met a friend, whom he at once addressed with—

“ Well, I have been on my legs at last in the House !”

“ You—indeed ? — When, pray, and on what occasion ?”

“ Oh, last night. I seconded ——’s amendment on the —— Bill.” Then with an air of indifference : “ You ’ll see it all in the morning papers.”

“ Oh, I am very glad to hear it. I didn’t happen to look at the debates yet ; but I’ll get the Times at once.”

“ You will find a better report in the Morning Chronicle ; but I am treated very badly indeed in the Herald and Post.”

The friend, thus informed and directed, at once proceeded to look over the papers, that he might be qualified to satisfy the orator’s anxiety about his fame when next they should meet.

The task was neither very long, nor very heavy. The churlish Post and Herald gave no more information than that—

“ An honourable member, whose name we could not learn, seconded the motion.”

In the Times report there was more accuracy, but not much more of favour. It announced that—

“ *Mr. ——— seconded the amendment!* ”

The fuller and entirely satisfactory record of the Morning Chronicle was thus worded:—

“ Mr. ——— said, he had much pleasure in seconding the amendment *of the honourable member who had just sat down!* ”

It was of the “chief artificer” and most effective *agitator* of this gentleman’s repeated elections—(elections, be it said at the same time, well merited by the rectitude and *straightforwardness* of the latter’s votes in Parliament)—that the following story is told:—

He was haranguing a large meeting upon the necessity of preparation for an election struggle that was approaching. After having run through all the popular topics of the time, and especially dwelt upon that which was with them above all and before all—the “REPALE,” he wound up amid

the delighted cheers of his auditory, (who had often witnessed and fully recognised the value of his former services to the popular cause,) with some such peroration as this:—

“Ay, boys!—you may be sure of seeing me at your head at the next election, as you have often seen me before! [Cheers, and cries of ‘We have, we have! *Thru* for you, and long life to you!’] Yes, I will be ever ready at your call, and the call of my country, to lead you on to victory over the paltry enemies of Ireland! [Cheers.] To the end of my life I will ever be at your service, and I do think that were I to die to-morrow, I think I’d try and get back to you for the elections!”

“Troth, then, Charlie,” said a fellow in the crowd, “’tis yourself would be for short parliaments then!”

Much about the same time that the respected “*single-speech*” orator, whose unexpected “coming out” we have recorded, achieved his fame with the British public, another Irish member obtained as unexpected, but not quite so agreeable a publicity, through the impertinence of one of the men who make up lists of the members of parliament.

Deceived by the particularity of the inquiries which he had been requested to favour the publisher by filling up, he unwarily mentioned the circumstance that his family dated in Ireland from the period of the first English invasion, in the reign of Henry the Second. When the list came out, he found himself enregistered as follows:—

“ Mr. —, M.P. for —, Radical and Repealer. *Went to Ireland with Strongbow!* ”

In that case the honourable member might have consoled himself by reflecting that he was thus undoubtedly qualified to have attention paid to his opinions, as the “*oldest inhabitant*” of these realms.

The rising of parliament in 1835 was a relief and a release indeed. I doubt if, during any of the stormy years that have since elapsed, it can have been felt so in as great, certainly not in a greater degree. To the unusual length, multitude, and inherent difficulties of the debates, was superadded that which tires infinitely more, the constant and extreme excitement of the worst and bitterest party feelings. More fierceness, more vindictiveness, and more uncharitableness of all kinds, it is impossible that any session could have

ever witnessed, since parliaments began; and the bad passions raging within doors had unfortunately their counterparts outside.

After such a session, my father, who had had to bear much more than his proper share of "the heats of the day and the sweets," relished the seclusion of his mountain-home at Darrynane with great and redoubled zest, and indeed stood seriously in need of its repose and relaxation.

The manner of his life while there may have some interest for those who have only known him as the energetic and determined agitator.

So far as the weather permitted, he alternated days of study and mental labour with those of abandonment to extreme and protracted fatigue in the enjoyment of his favourite amusement, viz. hare-hunting through the neighbouring mountains on foot.

Upon wet days, or days appointed for staying at home, he did not rise till what had become, since giving up his profession, his usual hour, viz. between eight and nine. Mass in his domestic chapel was said at nine every morning; after attending which he received the post commands, (brought every morning, a distance of fourteen

miles, by *relays* of indifferently mounted postboys,) and occupied himself during breakfast, and for an hour or two afterwards, with wading through his correspondence and the heap of newspapers that he daily received.

Then came three or four hours of close confinement to his study, while he wrote, or dictated to secretary or clerk, answers to letters public or private, frameworks of bills on different subjects, and Addresses to the Repealers. About four, if the weather at all permitted it, he sauntered out in his dressing-gown and cap, along the green *beach* or miniature *downs* that intervene between Darrynane Abbey and the sea, or tracked along the edge of the waves themselves upon the beautiful sands below, pausing ever and anon in deep thought, and betraying by the sudden and involuntary motion of the arm, that some vivid thought of Ireland's wrongs had flashed across his mind, and had formed itself in words upon his lips.

At such moments we felt reluctant and at the same time eager to join him. There was the natural reluctance to disturb the absorbing train of thought in which he was plunged, and break in upon that precious solitude and solitary self-

communion which is so dear to men overworked by the anxieties of politics ; and there was the equally natural desire to enjoy his company at such a time, when he was ever ready to pour out his whole soul to those in whose sympathies and affections he confided.

Next morning (if a bright, or at any rate a dry one), the scene was changed ! Shortly after dawn, his huntsman,—with his own previous permission, certainly, but equally ready, in the freedom without disrespect which, in the remoter districts of Ireland, is yet to be found between landlord and clansman, to do it *without* such authorization,—knocked at his door and *told* him to be stirring and not lose the fine morning.

Similar intimations went round to the young men belonging to the family, or in the house as visitors ; but ere the first of them had shown themselves, the *Arch-Agitator* himself was sure to be up, dressed, and *out* ; with his tall *wattle*, or long stick, such as is commonly used in mountain walking there, in his hand, and the newly-released hounds baying joyously about him.

Breakfast was not thought of,—or, to be far more accurate, it *was* thought of most carefully,

but not *for the time*. Orders were carefully given to have *all manner of breakfast*, Irish, Scotch, and foreign, packed up in baskets, and sent on the backs of three or four stout mountaineers after the hunting party. Not a morsel of it, however, was to be consumed till at least *two hares* had been killed; an operation which sometimes engaged the hounds until close upon, or full noon-tide, greatly to the dismay and discomfort of the less active and more voracious of the hunters. But when it did come, there was ample compensation for the delay.

A sheltered spot in some mountain ravine was usually chosen for the meal; taking care that it should possess three other requisites, viz. a fine, clear, sparkling, mountain stream; a southern aspect, so as to have the benefit of the sun's heat, while sheltered from the wind; and a view over the splendid scenery of mountain and ocean that lay below. The breakfast was then set about in right good earnest, and prodigies of *demolition* accomplished, while laugh and jest went rapidly round; and the merriest of all there was Daniel O'Connell.

Merry until the post-bags came. On these

mornings, after having been eased of the letters for the *stay-at-homes*, the bags were despatched after the hunting party, and during the time that the inferior crowd of huntsmen, dog-boys, and *dogs*, were regaling themselves at a little distance with the *disjecta membra* of their superiors' meal, my father was as deeply immersed in politics as if on the point of going down to the House to plunge into a hot debate.

The moment, however, that the men had concluded their meal, he was upon his legs the first, pitching away Times, Chronicle, Freeman, Pilot, Globe, &c. &c. in much admired confusion, and *breasting* the mountain again. Up to the last year of his life, he displayed an activity, and a power of endurance of fatigue on these occasions, that often put much younger men to shame.

Hurrying from hill-top to hill-top, and choosing his points of view with what military men would call an admirable *coup d'œil*, he watched every incident of the hunt, every turn and double of the hare, and all the patient or eager trackings of his excellent beagles, with the liveliest and most entire interest. During the lulls of the chase he relapsed into political meditations again; and the

same indications I have alluded to before, of the current of busy and stirring thought through his brain, were visible from time to time. But one cry from the hounds—one *giving tongue*, at least of the older and steadier dogs, (whose note he always distinguished as clearly and readily as the huntsman himself,) and at once politics, and all thought but that of the hunt, passed away as quickly as the last wreaths of the morning fog, swept off from the mountain-peaks around him before the fresh and gladsome breeze of the Atlantic.

Of this I had one experience, the remembrance of which teases me to the present hour. I was alone with him upon a glorious autumn day during the recess of 1835, at the very pinnacle of *Cooma-kishtheh*, the high mountain over which the road from Caherciveen to Darrynane then traversed, and around which the present road passes. The truly magnificent panorama of mountain-promontory and islet, wild bay and illimitable ocean, lay before us in all its sublimity. Deeply engaged in thought as he was, I could not restrain myself from interrupting him with an expression of admiration. He joined in it, and then added,

“ These are the scenes, John,———”

“Fioch! Fioch!—Fioch inish! (see, see now!) there’s the hare, masther—there’s the hare,” half-whispered, half-screamed a ragged urchin, jumping down between us from the top of a crag, and pointing eagerly to what seemed a small brown *dot* moving with vast rapidity across a patch of green heather two or three hundred yards below.

At the same instant, like the sudden swell of a magnificent organ, came up the hill the musical burst of the hounds in full cry, as, emerging from a deep *coomer*, they got a view of the hare. Away went my father, and away to the winds went the deep thought which a moment before had been beaming from his glance, and just breathing from his lips, and it was lost to me for ever!

Until too dark to hunt any longer, he always persevered in staying out, and came home then the freshest of the party. The late dinner then ensuing was pleasant in the extreme, as the excitement of the day usually put him in high spirits, and he unlocked all his treasures of anecdote and historical and professional reminiscence. At such times especially, the strangers who visited the Abbey were pleased and fascinated with him; while none of them, however widely differing

from his politics, had ever reason to say, that even in the most unrestrained moment of the conversation a word ever escaped that could awaken unpleasantness, by jarring with their peculiar opinions, or offending their party prepossessions.

Next morning the eager huntsman had relapsed into the studious and absorbed politician ; but only to be transformed back again into the huntsman when twenty-four hours more had rolled by ; and thus, with the interval of Sunday—dedicated, after the hours of prayer, to quiet exercise, or to the settling of wrangles among his tenantry, which else had grown to petty lawsuits—passed away the few weeks of relaxation enjoyed by the Arch-Agitator.

CHAPTER X.

THE NEW SESSION.—THE TITHE QUESTION.—D. RONAYNE, ESQ.—THE PIKES !—MR. RONAYNE'S MUSE—THE COALITION.—THE SPANISH LEGION.—STOCKDALE *v.* HANSARD.—SIR EDWARD SUGDEN.—THE LAW INSTITUTE.—MR. GROTE.—MR. G. BERKELEY.—SIR ANDREW AGNEW.—MR. POULETT SCROPE.—PERPLEXITIES OF "YOUNG MEMBERS."—ST. STEPHEN'S CHAPEL.—L'ÉCHO FRANÇAIS.—A STORMY DEBATE.

THE Parliamentary sessions of the years 1836 and 1837 were periods of great bitterness, angry feeling, and continuous *squabbling*: but we were not, by a few degrees at least, quite as near coming to the actual pulling of caps and scratching of faces as during our sittings of 1835.

The Tithe and Church question of Ireland; the measures of Municipal Reform proposed for the three countries respectively; the bills introduced by Lord Morpeth for the improvement and increase of the Irish Parliamentary franchise, with Lord Stanley's propositions at the other side for curtailing and in fact annihilating that franchise, in so far as its exercise by the *people* of Ireland was concerned; the organization and operations of the

British Auxiliary Legion in the service of the young Queen of Spain, and indeed the whole question of British intervention in the affairs of the Peninsula at that time ;—these, together with the episode (occasionally amusing, but far more often provocative of some of the dullest, heaviest, and dreariest debates we ever had suffered under) of the contentions between Stockdale and Hansard on the subject of the House's privilege, questioned before the courts by the former, of publishing evidence given before its Committees, were the chief matters that occupied our attention during the two years in question.

The Tithe question in Ireland was for several sessions what the Examiner called the "*jack-snipe*" of the Whig ministry: alluding to the Joe Miller story of the worthy gentleman to whom one jack-snipe furnished sport during several shooting seasons.

The grievance was heavily felt in Ireland, and had given occasion to some terrific scenes of blood. In five or six localities, the armed yeomanry, aided by soldiers and police, had fired upon the people, shooting numbers of them; and in one or two other places, the people, by stratagem, or

otherwise, had mastered small bodies of the police, and revenged themselves by a cruel massacre.

Of course it was a fruitful theme for oratory and declamation at public meetings, and at the hustings, during the general election, and did *yeoman service* to many a halting speaker, as well as powerful execution against all candidates having, or being accused of having, any species of interest in the tithe system, or any inclination to support or defend it.

Various were the denunciations hurled at the system, and the descriptions given of its disastrous and cruel operation. The most original certainly, as well as the briefest, was the following, given forth from a hustings in the County of Kerry:—

“ Ay, my fellow-countrymen! thus the poor man is robbed, by this accursed system, of fully *one-tenth* of his hard earnings; nay, even sometimes not less than *one-fifteenth*!”

“ Down with the bloody *Thides*” (as the word tithes was generally pronounced) was as common and as exciting a cry with the people, as “ Hurrah for the Repeal!” and as formidable a war-shout against the Tory party.

Other local imposts were not forgotten, when

popular attention came to be actively directed to the grievances of the tithe-levy. In some parts of the country these local imposts were more numerous and more annoying than others; and a special grievance of this kind gave rise, in 1836, to a scene that would almost have suited the disturbed times of the spring of the present year (1848) in Ireland.

The then member for the borough of Clonmel, the late Dominick Ronayne, Esq., (a gentleman most deservedly regarded and esteemed, particularly by the people of that district, to whom he had rendered highly valuable service, by gratuitously acting as their counsel in conducting cases for them in the courts, with reference to local taxes of which they complained,) was addressing his constituents just previous to his departure to attend Parliament in that year.

He was dwelling earnestly and eloquently upon the popular topics just then most in vogue; denouncing the fierce hostility to Ireland of the exasperated Conservatives in and out of the House; promising to do his part stoutly and faithfully in the battles of the session just then approaching; and conjuring the people to look for redress to the

efforts of their constituents, backed by their own voices, and not to have recourse to any violence.

In the midst of his pacific adjurations, a voice cried out from among the crowd—

“ *The pikes ! the pikes !* Mr. Ronayne.”

Startled and greatly vexed at such an interruption, with all its obvious inferences, the orator thought, however, that as the cry had not appeared to be caught up generally, the best policy would be to affect not to have heard it, and to proceed as if nothing had happened.

He accordingly resumed his speech as quickly as possible, with no other change than throwing a little more earnestness and energy in his counsellings to peace, order, and a respect for the law. But he had not proceeded for ten sentences more, when, to his dismay, the same voice was again upraised, shouting to him—

“ Ah, *the pikes ! the pikes !*—Mr. Ronayne, Sir, what about *the pikes ?*”

After another pause of indignant astonishment, Mr. Ronayne, perceiving that the crowd did not yet seem to take up the cry, or pay much regard to the interruption, again resolved to take no public notice of it ; and, raising his voice in the

hope of regaining and securing his auditory's attention, he went on once more with his former theme; and for several minutes without further annoyance.

But at last, the ominous cry was again upraised, and this time from three or four voices:—

“The pikes! the pikes! Sir! *Them's* the *raal* things! Talk to us about the pikes, Mr. Ronayne—that's what we want just now!”

There was no possibility of turning a deaf ear to this, especially as the people were beginning to get excited. The only other course open, was to meet full front, and crush with sublime indignation the rebellious outburst.

“You scoundrel,” roared the incensed orator, “you rebel and traitor, how dare you come here to disturb a peaceful meeting with your seditious outcries? You have been sent here, and are paid by some enemy of the people, thirsting for the people's blood! But you shall be disappointed; and if there be nobody else to give you up to the police, I'll do it myself!”

“Oh, Mr. Ronayne! Oh, your honour, Sir!” as, suiting the action to the word, Ronayne sprung from the platform, and seized the man by

the collar, "what's the matter, Sir, at all? Sure I'm no rebel, and never was a rebel, and didn't *mane* any harm in the world! Sure it's often I have heard your own honour *spake*, and spake grandly too, *agin* thim thievin' *turnpikes*!—where we are fairly robbed—*bad luck to thim*!"

And so it was. The turnpike system in some parts of Ireland was, *then* at least, quite as obnoxious as in Wales a little later, with this difference, that what Rebecca denounced under the genteeler name of *toll-bars* and *gates*, Paddy is quite content to anathematize under the easier and *handier* name of "*pikes*!"

Mr. Ronayne had many capabilities to be a useful member of parliament, had he entered it at an earlier age, or had brought with him a moderate degree of self-confidence. As it was, he made two or three exceedingly good speeches, and on more than one occasion did the House good service, by calling no less a person than Lord Stanley to order. To a man of Ronayne's excitable temperament, the *nonchalance* of the noble lord, in lounging nearly at full length along the Treasury bench, putting his feet upon the table, and indulging in other elegant *Yankeeisms* of various kinds during

the debates, was quite intolerable; and he protested against it with such energy, as to ensure at least a temporary good behaviour on the part of the offender.

No casual acquaintance would ever have suspected Mr. Ronayne of verse-making, and yet that he was amenable to the charge, the following specimens will show. They were trifles, with which he amused his occasional leisure hours during his constant attendance in parliament throughout the session, and were thrown off by him with singular ease and rapidity. I had thought to have given some of his very striking poetical descriptions of Stanley, Sir Robert Peel, Sir James Graham, Lord John Russell, Lord Althorp and others, but unfortunately have not been able to make out the newspapers in which they appeared at the time, and from which they were never collected, although highly deserving of separate publication. The following is all that I have been able to rescue:—

“ THE COALITION.

THE COALITION.

[OF WHIGS AND TORIES ON THE COERCION BILL]

(From the Irish Monthly Magazine for March 1833, page 847.)

It is done, it is done, the strife is past,
 And the struggle of years is over at last ;
 The cup is drain'd and the dregs are gone,
 And the Whig and the Tory all are one ?
 Oh ! sure there must be some wondrous change—
 Some bless'd Millennium near at hand,
 When elements ever adverse and strange
 Can mingle together so mild and bland.

“Or is it,” said I, “that we’ve haply lit
 On such times as are told in Holy Writ,
 When the leopard and kid would blithely play,
 And the wolf ask the lambkin out to tea ?
 Are we born to see such times as those,
 When an end shall be put to wars and woes—
 When earth shall become a minor heaven,
 And church-rates and tithes be freely given ;
 When parsons shall look on pigs nor covet
 To sweep the swine to their holy tether,—
 And Biblicals think on ‘the sod’ to love it,
 And Pat and the ‘*poliss*’* herd together?”

So blithe were the broken tones that sped
 From my joyful tongue, as I fondly read
 How the Ayes and the Noes did meet of late,
 And lacker each other in grand debate :
 ’Twas then that I felt beside mine ear,
 The “little bird” of the poet peer ;
 And thus it seemed to say or sing,
 As it ruffled and plumed its tiny wing :
 “Are you, then, indeed of the doltish race,
 Who think from such scenes as these to trace,

* *Hibernicè* for “*police*.”

Through the threatening dim of the future's haze,
A promise of better or brighter days?
Can you look for an hour of hope or glory,
An era of good to this blasted land,
From seeing the grasping heartless Tory
And hungry Whig go hand in hand?

"Do times of rest and repose betide,
When the bear and the wolf range side by side,—
And sweep from the region of ice and snow,
To harry the peaceful vale below?
Ah! no—that sight is big with ill
To the hapless swain of the Alpine hill,
And heralds a scene of woe and blood,
That shall tinge with its hue the mountain flood.
'Tis thus with the prowling gang you hail;
Like the wolf and bear are yon mongrel clan;
They have banded to hunt on a common trail,
For the selfsame prey—and that prey is Man!

"But never despond,"—it ceased at this,
And its little breast swell'd with a song of bliss,
Like the martin that chaunts the dawn of spring,
As it flutters along on its golden wing;
Yet, just ere the vision began to fail,
These words came faintly down the gale:—
"Let them flourish awhile with unwholesome growth;
There's a spirit abroad that will crush them both."

The practice which is sometimes recommended to young M.P.s of allying themselves with one particular subject, was pushed to great lengths about this time in the House of Commons. Whichever of the subjects, enumerated at the beginning of this chapter as having formed the

staple of our discussions in '36 and '37, chanced to turn up, there were certain individuals and *sets* of individuals, who seemed to consider they had a vested right in it, and immediately set about vindicating it by long speeches.

Thus the affairs of Spain and the unfortunate Spanish Legion seemed to be the "*jack-snipe*" of Messrs. Grove, Price, Fector, and Borthwick; while the tilting between Stockdale and Hansard put us at the *no-mercy* of Sir Edward Sugden, and four or five other very able and distinguished, but most interminably prosing lawyers. A groan, in which melancholy resignation contended with despair, was sure to circle round the House when Sir Edward was seen buckling on his armour to do battle for the privileges of the sacred law of libel, with the defenders of the privileges of the House.

At a later period, Sir Edward Sugden was appointed to the office of Lord Chancellor in Ireland—having in the interim, of course, ceased to be a Member of Parliament.

In this new position he showed himself to much better advantage than in the former; and performed its duties in a manner quite worthy of his

high reputation as a lawyer. But he was “*uncongenial to the soil*,” and the soil to him; and innumerable were the odd stories about him afloat among the Dublin public, *with and without* foundation.

For him was revived the story, I believe rightly to be told of a countryman of his who had preceded him by several years in the same high office, that having expressed, in consultation with an Irish adviser, surprise, that in the case of a local insurrectionary movement, the *posse comitatus* of the county where it occurred had not been called out, he was astonished with the answer :

“*Posse comitatus*,” my Lord ; “why *they’re out already* ! What we want is to *get them home again* !”

It is reported *exclusively of him*, that he visited, somewhat by surprise, a lunatic asylum in the neighbourhood of Dublin, to satisfy himself as to its condition. A hasty notification of the visit is said to have got there just before his arrival, but one a good deal coloured by the waggish propensities of the sender (whoever he was); and the head of the establishment chancing to be absent, the notification in all its colouring was accepted

as truth, and so acted upon by the subordinate officials.

In consequence, Sir Edward is said to have found himself rather unceremoniously treated, while awaiting in the parlour the return of the proprietor; and when his patience had become exhausted, and that he signified his intention of going over the establishment without further delay, he was struck aghast by being informed by the attendant that he could not be allowed to do it.

“ Can’t be allowed to do it! What do you mean, fellow?” asked the indignant Chancellor.

“ I mean just what I say, then. You *can’t* go, so you may as well be quiet!”

“ What do you mean by this insolence? Open the door, sir, and show me to my carriage. I shall report your conduct, and if your master does not punish you, I shall take steps to make both him and you respect my authority.”

“ Oh! be *asy* now with your *authority*. Keep quiet, I tell you. *Dixil a foot* you’ll stir out of this till the *Docthur* comes back, and puts you where you want to be sadly.”

“ What’s the meaning of all this?—Don’t you know who I am, fellow, or are you mad?”

“ Oh! faith, there’s one of us mad, sure enough. Troth, I know you very well, if that’s all that’s troubling you !”

“ You can’t know me, or you wouldn’t dare to behave thus to me—I am the Lord Chancellor of Ireland.”

“ Lord Chancellor?—well, sure you’re welcome home to us—*We have three or four Lord Chancellors here already.*”

And the story goes that Sir Edward Sugden had to submit to the *contrainte par corps*,

“ Patience, perforce, with wilful choler meeting,”

until the return of the proprietor and manager of the asylum, an hour or two later; when with some difficulty he established his identity and *sanity*, and was once more a free man.

“ I know not how the case may be,
I tell the tale as ’twas told to me !”

One of the least creditable acts of his Chancelorship, was the having exerted the formidable influence of his office to crush an attempt then being made to found a Law-Institute in Ireland; where young barristers and law-students might get some better acquaintance with their profession

than the present system of undirected individual study can supply, even with the aid of the most assiduous eating of the appointed legs of mutton at the Irish and English Inns of Court.

The only assignable reason for this interference with a most laudable and much needed enterprise, to which some men of great eminence at the Irish bar were about to devote themselves, and which could not fail of being an improvement upon the present almost burlesque system of legal education in either country, was, that it might possibly and remotely tend to the doing away with the humiliating badge of inferiority to which students for the Irish bar are compelled to submit, in having to "attend terms"—that is to say, to eat indifferent and high-priced dinners, at the Inns of Court of England, as well as those of their own country.

No imposition of the kind is attempted with the students for the English bar. They are not compelled to waste their time and money with journeys to Dublin and residences there; but can "*eat their way to the law*" in the same place, throughout all the requisite number of terms.

It was often suggested to my father to bring in

a measure to abrogate this unnecessary and insulting infliction upon Irish law students. But he always declined doing so; partly, because the obsequiousness of some of the law authorities in Ireland would have arrayed them against the proposal; and partly that he considered that one good resulted from the practice, inasmuch as the young gentlemen of Ireland who were obliged to come over to England under the regulation in question, had thus the opportunity of personal knowledge and experience of the slighting and contemptuous disposition there entertained towards themselves and their country.

Reference to legs of mutton naturally recalls me to "*mes moutons*," in the unfinished list of the special motions of the Parliament of 1835-1837.

Mr. Grote annually made an excellent speech and took a division upon the Ballot question. Mr. Grantley Berkeley made a similar annual demonstration in favour of the very important and interesting question of admitting the ladies to be present at our deliberations.

To the shame of the House be it recorded, that the ladies' champions were unsuccessful in each of the three or four divisions taken as to their admis-

sion. But, if rumour speak correctly, they have in this, as in other points, been true to the traditions and rights of their sex, and have somehow or other obtained admission in spite of all the solemn votes, and still more solemn speeches, in which their perpetual exclusion was decreed.

The Bill or Bills for the “Better Observance (according to some parties in the House, the *bitter* observance) of the Sabbath day,” brought out Sir Andrew Agnew and Mr. Andrew Johnstone as punctually and as unmercifully to us, as the Spanish question brought out Mr. Grove Price, and the Privilege question Sir Edward Sugden.

Sir Andrew was the target of many shafts, for the exemptions which his measures reserved for the Sabbath pleasures of the rich; while they came down with a heavy hand upon the scanty enjoyments, and even common comforts of the humbler classes. But no rebuff, no sarcasm, no sharp commentary seemed to daunt or affect him, till Mr. Ward, the present Secretary to the Admiralty, brought against him the soft, but undeniable impeachment, that he had been seen travelling in a public coach himself; in one of

those very vehicles, whose locomotion on Sundays he had denounced as sinful, while entirely silent as to private carriages; and, furthermore, that when the coach stopped for dinner, he had ordered a *special beefsteak* for himself; thus causing servile work to be done, in flagrant violation of the spirit and teachings of his own legislative essays.

The “great blunder” of Poor Laws for Ireland had then, as they have had uninterruptedly since, the indefatigable and honest, though sadly mistaken advocacy of Mr. Poulett Scrope. Amongst other coadjutors, he had Mr. Richards, M.P. for Knaresborough; a gentleman whose zeal was so *forward*, that he generally was, to use a sea-phrase, “brought up” by the table of the House ere he had spoken twenty sentences. Beginning at his place on the floor of the House, he insensibly advanced a couple of feet at every point of his argument; and despite all the *coat-pullings* and whispered suggestions of other members, (which in such cases are sure not to be attended to, or to be misunderstood,) and even the reluctant warnings from the Chair, he inevitably *worked* himself forward, either up to the table, or

right across the House, according to the direction that the current of his remarks might happen to take.

The remark has occurred before as to the love of a little mischief that prevails in the House. And certainly no set of school-boys ever more enjoyed the perplexities of "*a new boy*," than do the members who are thoroughly broken in, and accustomed to harness, and to the dull jog-trot routine of the ordinary forms of the House, enjoy the woeful perplexities of a "*young member*," as *new* members, even if they count their threescore and ten of years, are always denominated.

At one time a new member will rise with *his hat on*; at another, he passes between the person addressing the House and the Chair, which is a high crime and misdemeanour; or between the latter and the clerks' table—an equally grave offence. Again, he interrupts irregularly the member speaking; or, as has happened more than once with our warm-hearted Irish *recruits*, he bursts beyond the limits of the cold "*Hear, Hear*," of approbation, which is all Parliamentary canons allow for the expression of identity of sentiment with the orator, and is

carried away by his enthusiasm into a good, honest, heart-spoken "*Hurrah!*"

At all and each of these *shocking* transgressions of propriety and form, a fierce volley of "ORDER! ORDER!" is fired off at the astonished offender; whose look of ludicrous and helpless bewilderment adds much to the zest of the scene. Not very well comprehending the nature of his offence, and infinitely more puzzled than assisted by the hurried explanations of his officious neighbours, he slinks down, with an awkward bow of apology and submission to the Speaker, into the nearest place that he can *screw* himself into, in utter confusion or in magnificent *sullens*, at the badgering to which he has unwittingly subjected himself.

But the old members of the House, who are thus so active in observing the peccadilloes (or, as Mr. Hume, by an unlucky slip of the tongue, once pronounced it *piccadillies*,) of the new comers, do not scruple upon occasion to be as disorderly, or ten times as much so, as the rawest and most inexperienced of the latter. When a tedious debate is to be put an end to, an obnoxious or drawling orator to be *burked*, a division to be hastened, that the sacred hour of dinner may not

be too much trenched upon, a variety of noise and disorder, highly creditable to their *ingenuity* at least, is sure to prevail, until the desired object be perforce accomplished. The diapason is rung through all the changes of "Question, Question! Divide, Divide! Adjourn, Adjourn! Bar, Bar!"—the latter (which is invariably mistaken by the uninitiated for *Bah! Bah!*) being a kind of invitation to the Speaker to add to the delays by interfering to order members standing at and below the bar to "take their seats,"—*if they can!*

The unfortunate member speaking makes a thousand fruitless, although, no doubt, (if they *could be heard*,) eloquent and most moving appeals for indulgence; vows to all his gods that "he will not detain the House one moment,"—that he has "but one or two remarks more to make,"—that really, "considering the great importance of the subject, he did expect,"—&c. &c. &c.

In vain!—all in vain!—for him there is no mercy, no compassion, no consideration, no indulgence! The inexorable disturbers will have their way! In vain even his last resort, the last—

"Fatal retreat of the unfortunate brave,"

the menace that he will move the adjournment of

the debate; or the actual making of the motion! In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred his resolution is not proof against the overwhelming shouts of the indignant and intolerant host assailing him, or the representations and appeals of "*d——good-natured friends*," beseeching, soliciting, wheedling him, into a mollification of wrath, and abandonment alike of speech and purpose.

The old House (St. Stephen's Chapel) was much more favourable to the *burking* of a debate, or an orator, by noise and interruption, than the present. The recesses of the old gothic windows, planked and wainscotted as they were in the most approved style of those veritable *dark ages* of England, the 17th and 18th centuries, gave opportunities of concealment from the eye of the most vigilant Speaker or Sergeant-at-arms; whereas, in the present House there are no such convenient lurking-places, and the guerilla warfare of interruptions and annoyances must be carried on without cover, and exposed to the heavy fire of the authorities.

It seems a consolation to French writers, conscious of the wildly exciting scenes that occur in their own Chamber, to remark upon the disturb-

ances which sometimes occur in the British House of Commons. The author of a grave, elaborate work of comparative statistics of England and France, (le Chevalier F. de Tassiès, in his work on the subject just named, published in 1845,) has not thought it out of place to give a narration of one of those occurrences in the following fashion.*

“ On parle souvent de l'indécence de certaines séances à la Chambre des Députés en France. Les journaux Anglais de Juin, 1840, nous donnent des détails qui surpassent de beaucoup tout ce qu'il peut y avoir d'étrange dans les mœurs parlementaires Françaises.

“ *L'Echo Français* du 17 Juin, 1840, s'exprime ainsi qui suit:—

Le Représentatif de la Grande Bretagne est en démence. La Chambre des Communes devrait plutôt tenir ses séances à *Bedlam* qu'à Westminster. Plus de trois cents membres depuis dix heures du soir, (les séances se tiennent habituellement le soir,) jusqu'à deux heures du matin, en

* “ La France et l'Angleterre, ou statistique morale et physique de la France comparée à celle de l'Angleterre. Par le Chevalier F. de Tassiès. Versailles, 1845.”

réponse au discours d'O'Connell, ont imité les cris du chien and du chat ; d'autres ont *sifflés avec leurs clés jusqu'à extermination*[!].

* * * * *

On compte dans la Chambre des Communes cinq cents quinze membres présents. On vient de voter la révision des listes électorales [*Registry of Voters' Bill*], d'Irlande, présentée par les ministres, et repoussée par 93 voix. Le succès est annoncé par de bruyants applaudissements. *Quelques membres jettent leurs chapeaux en l'air, en criant, Hourah !* Enfin le silence se rétablit avec peine, et la parole est donnée à Lord Stanley, *Protestant zélé.*

“Je demande,” dit-il, “que la Chambre se forme en comité, Lundi, pour cette mesure.”

LORD JOHN RUSSELL, (*Ministre.*) — “J'insiste pour que la délibération soit renvoyée à Mercredi ; faut-il, pour un projet de loi si contesté que le présent, sacrifier la discussion des lois d'un intérêt général. Je demande aussi que la Chambre vote sur ma proposition.”

MONSIEUR O'CONNELL se lève au milieu d'une agitation générale.

“Et moi,” dit-il avec force, “au moment où

nous mettrons notre pied dans cette enceinte, je demanderai que la Chambre s'ajourne, et qu'il n'y ait pas de Chambre. Je ferai cette motion une fois, dix fois ; j'userai votre temps, selon mon droit, à vous faire voter, afin d'empêcher que ce bill [Lord Stanley's counter-project of a Registry Bill,] ne soit adopté!"

Un inexprimable tumulte accueille ces paroles. Les *Whigs* applaudissent avec ferveur. Les *Tories* poussent d'affreux grognemens.

M. O'CONNELL.—"J'ai une raison décisive qui justifie ma conduite. Ce bill foule aux pieds le peuple d'Irlande." (Nouvelle explosion de murmures, les membres de l'opposition adressent à M. O'Connell les injures les plus grossières ; d'autres font entendre des cris sauvages ; enfin des sifflets incessants ne lui permettent plus de continuer.)

M. O'CONNELL, (faisant un violent effort de poumons, and dominant le tumulte).—"Je répète que ce bill foule aux pieds le peuple d'Irlande !" (Nouveau tumulte ; les membres placés près la barre imitent les cris de plusieurs animaux ; l'un grogne comme de cochon—l'autre miaule comme le chat—un autre fait le chant du coq—on distingue sur-

tout un horrible beuglement de taureau qui se prolonge long-temps.)

M. O'CONNELL, avec une énergie croissante—

“Oui! quand ces beuglements de la bestialité [beastly bellowings, *Hansard*,] seraient dix fois plus forts encore, je déclare que mon devoir me commande d'empêcher la discussion, et je remplirai mon devoir!”

Ces paroles sont suivies d'un tel désordre, qu'aucune expression ne saurait le peindre.

SIR STRATFORD CANNING saisit une seconde de silence pour engager le Président à sommer l'honorable membre à retracter ses paroles, et surtout l'expression “bestialité.” À peine ces paroles sont prononcées, que *pendant plusieurs heures* [!!] plus de cinq cents membres crient de toutes leurs forces—“*Il le fera! il ne le fera pas! à l'ordre! à l'ordre! à la porte O'Connell!*” le tout accompagné des imitations zoologiques le plus étranges et les plus affreuses! C'étaient les cris de deux armées de sauvages en présence.

LE PRÉSIDENT.—“Si l'expression ‘bestialité’ à échappé à l'orateur par inadvertence, il en conviendra lui-même devant l'assemblée.”

Profond silence. M. O'CONNELL se lève.

“ Le mot dont je me suis servi, c’est *beuglement*.”

Les *Tories*, avec force—“ Vous avez ajouté *bestialité*!”

M. O’CONNELL (avec un geste de mépris).—“ Oh, étranges logiciens ! est-ce qu’un beuglement n’appartient pas à la bête ! Je le répète, je me rétracte rien !”

Les *Whigs* ont des convulsions d’un rire bruyant et fou : les *Tories* sifflent, trépignent, imitent les cris sauvages des animaux. Enfin, Monsieur O’Connell, s’adressant au Président, dit :

“ J’aurais invoqué votre autorité, Monsieur, mais je voulais poursuivre ma discussion, lorsqu’une première explosion indécente m’a coupé la parole. Vous n’êtes pas intervenu. Une seconde interruption arrive ; and vous n’intervenez pas davantage. Une troisième enfin, and c’est alors que je me suis protégé moi-même ; puisque vous ne me protégez pas. (*Applaudissements frénétiques.*)

“ A peine avais-je parlé, que Sir Stratford Canning s’est épris tout-à-coup d’un violent amour de l’ordre. Cet amour avait doucement sommeillé pendant l’infernal tapage. . . Que l’honorable membre me rappelle encore à l’ordre. J’ai dit et je répète que le Bill de Lord Stanley part d’une in-

tention perfide, et que c'est la destruction du Bill de Réforme Irlandais, et de l'Emancipation des Catholiques. Lord Stanley est un vieil ennemi de l'Irlande (avec un geste de menace); et l'Irlande lui rend bien sa haine!"

SIR STRATFORD CANNING.—"L'honorable membre de Dublin a le droit de critiquer la mesure: mais il doit s'interdire toute remarque sur les intentions."

M. O'CONNELL, (avec vivacité.)—"Qu'ai-je avancé? Que le Bill était tyrannique et despotique?—Je le maintiens. Que le noble Lord (Stanley) était un profond ennemi du Catholicisme et de l'Irlande, et qu'il est heureux de voir aujourd'hui ce corps abattu, and de pouvoir piétiner sur lui?—Je le maintiens!"

"Ce qui me reste à faire, c'est d'user de tous les privilèges que la constitution, et les règlements me donnent, pour embarrasser et briser la marche du Bill, je le ferai!"

Les membres Irlandais s'écrient tous: "Nous vous soutiendrons!"

LORD JOHN RUSSELL.—"Ce désordre affligeant doit enfin cesser; et je ne crois pas la chambre en état de continuer à délibérer."

SIR BENJAMIN HALL, (Membre de Mary-le-bone, quartier où les radicaux dominant).—“ Je déclare que je refuse de m’associer à toute opposition factieuse contre un projet de loi, par la seule raison qu’il émane du côté des *Tories* !” (Applaudissements à tout rompre du côté des *Tories*, étonnement extrême du côté des *Whigs*.)

M. O’CONNELL.—“ Quelles étranges paroles que celles-là. Mon honorable ami ne vient-il pas insinuer que mon opposition est factieuse ? Oh, tracassiers à bonnes intentions ! L’hésitation de votre esprit est toujours dans la couardise de votre caractère ! S’il y a quelque chose de factieux ici, c’est le Bill lui-même !”

SIR B. HALL.—“ Je ne comprends pas la langage de mon savant ami, (rires bruyants.) Tout ce que j’ai à dire, c’est que si je vois un membre réclamer ajournement sur ajournement, je crois à une opposition factieuse.” (*Applaudissements forcenés.*)

M. O’CONNELL.—“ Je vous félicite, membre de Mary-le-bone, des bravos que vous recueillez ! Ils doivent vous être d’autant plus chers, que vous en avez peu l’habitude.—Je vous félicite aussi de votre modestie. Quoi, vous ne me comprenez pas ?

Je n'avais pas cette idée-là de votre intelligence. Mais, vous m'alarmez pour la mienne, car je vous comprends bien, moi. Allez reposer votre corps et vos esprits, et réfléchissez mûrement que si vous entendez de moi de dures paroles, vous les avez méritées, et vous prendrez la résolution de ne les plus mériter désormais."

Après ce dernier discours, un grand nombre de membres placés près de la porte, et tout à fait exténués de fatigue, ont fait un dernier effort pour rire, crier et siffler; et sont sortis en criant, "Ajournez, ajournez!"

"Enfin la séance est levée à une heure fort avancée de la nuit."—(Pp. 117—119.)

The foregoing description by a foreigner, of a scene not by any means uncommon, (as those who were in Parliament during the "ten years' war" of Whig and Tory after the Reform Bill can well testify,) at the period, and for some years previously and later, I have preferred to insert, rather than jot down my own reminiscences of it. *He* cannot be accused of bias either way; as I might be.

He has omitted to record that the Speaker, on being appealed to by both parties in the conflict,

gave the excellent and becoming decision, that the expression "*beastly bellowings*," (*beuglements de la bestialité*, as rendered by le Chevalier de Tassières,) was certainly out of order; but not more so than the interruptions that called it forth."

The Chevalier thus concludes his narrative:—

"Que penser d'une pareille conduite, tenue par plus de cinq cents membres de parlement, l'élite de la société Anglaise? Au lieu d'une réunion de *gentlemen*, n'est-ce pas plutôt, en apparence, la réunion désordonnée d'un Club? Comment expliquer des démonstrations aussi sauvages, si en opposition avec la mesure parfaite dans les convenances des membres de l'aristocratie Anglaise? Cette énigme serait insoluble si on ne réfléchissait qu'une passion violente agitait les cœurs: la haine profonde du Protestantisme contre le Catholicisme!"

CHAPTER XI.

LORD ASHLEY.—LORD DUDLEY COUTTS STUART.—LORD STANLEY.—MR. BROTHERTON.—A REFORM DINNER.—“A BOTTLE OF PORT FOR THE TURKISH AMBASSADOR.”—OPPOSITION AMONGST IRISH MEMBERS.—THE RAILWAYS, A PARTY QUESTION.—MR. DRUMMOND.—LORD NORMANBY.—IRISH RAILWAYS.—DUBLIN AND KINGSTOWN RAILWAY.—HER MAJESTY’S ACCESSION.—NEW PARLIAMENT.—INCREASING WEAKNESS OF THE WHIG MINISTRY.—VISIT TO PARIS.—JOSEPH HUME.

REVERTING again, after every episode, to the list of special subjects *specially* taken up by particular members of Parliament, it may be closed, in so far as regards the years I have been last speaking of, with the following items and names:—

Factories Bill—Lord Ashley.

Polish Refugees—Lord Dudley Coutts Stuart.

Ireland and her franchises—Lord Stanley.

and—most appropriate for a conclusion—

The Adjournment—Mr. Brotherton.

A set discussion of the merits and details of any of these subjects is foreign to the design of these

rough notes of Experiences, parliamentary and political.

The last-mentioned subject would need little discussion to recommend it, at least to the majority of the House of Commons. The worthy and excellent Mr. Brotherton has often been met with cries of "Oh, oh!" and other discouragements, when rising, as he has done with such persevering constancy, at twelve o'clock, or as soon after it as he can catch the Speaker's eye, to move the suspension of business, and the dismissal of the wearied members to their homes. But those cries have come from officials in possession, or expectant, who valued their own convenience in preference to that of the great bulk of the House; and they have been supported in their opposition by the many who pin their faith on the sleeve of the leading men at either side, and swallow their dicta with implicit confidence in small things, as well as in greater.

Alas! that I should have to write a postscript to my laudation of Mr. Brotherton! Since the preceding paragraph was written, a session has rolled away; and hurried as I am by the printer's devil, it is absolutely necessary, in the interests of

truth and justice, to make nearly a wholesale retractation. Mr. Brotherton's Spartan virtue hath departed from him ! He is himself no more ! One appealing glance from the Treasury Bench, one sweet soft word from ministerial lips, and the Cato of Salford has yielded, and the adjournment has *not* been moved, while Mr. Brotherton himself has !

“ Old times are changed—old manners gone,
And Ministers have Brotherton !!! ”

There is no argument against the common-sense proposal of changing the sittings from night to day, to be deduced from the small advantage that has appeared to result from the experiments hitherto made of casual day-meetings. The very circumstance that those meetings have been *casual* and extraordinary, has militated against them, causing difficulties and contrarieties with regard to the proceedings of important Committees, and putting men *out of their way*.

If the practice were regular and constant, members would speedily make up their minds and accommodate their habits to it. And even as it is, there is no denying that one advantage results, and of no common order, in the greater concise-

ness and brevity of the speeches delivered at morning sittings, compared to those which are inflicted upon us late in the evening.

All knowledge comes from experience, and experience must be bought. The House purchased it as to day-sittings, at the cost of many weary hours utterly thrown away in 1833 and part of 1834. It was thought that a great saving of time would be made, by meeting at twelve in the day for the presentation of petitions, and for the discussion of them—a practice then permitted. The consequence was, that every unfledged member, whose love of hearing his own voice was overborne by his *mauvaise honte* in the full assembly at night, caught eagerly the opportunities given him in the thinly attended sittings of the morning, and inflicted hours of his empty tediousness upon the unhappy Speaker, and those whom any business compelled to be present. In fact, the early sittings came to be mere debating schools, without advancement of the real business of the session in any way, or public profit in the smallest degree.

A very wise rule now precludes speeches (and of course *debates*), on the mere presentation of

petitions, save in very special cases, with special notice given. And morning sittings—of which there were more last session than ever before—are devoted to real business quite as much as those in the evening.

And there *does* appear to be a *distant* hope that they will come to be the *rule*, instead of, as they still are, the exception. When that desirable consummation is effected, Mr. Brotherton's *midnight* occupation will be gone.

The perseverance of Lord Dudley Coutts Stuart in his advocacy of the case of the unfortunate refugee Poles, is deserving of all praise. It may be true that his benevolence may have been practised upon at various times, and to a greater or less degree, but that of course in no way detracts from his merit. Such a circumstance rather gives him a new claim to respect, inasmuch as so few have the courage to persevere in charitable acts where they have once found their confidence abused.

At a Reform Dinner—I believe given by us of the Liberal side of the House to Lord John Russell, in the Freemasons' Tavern, early in 1836 or 1837, the noble advocate of the Poles gallantly

and singularly displayed his perseverance in the cause to which he has devoted himself. We had all eaten, drunk, speechified, and shouted our fill, when, just as we were breaking up—the excitement of the evening burnt down as low as the flickering candles, and every man more intent on the dubious question of finding his own or any hat to go home in, than upon any of the political topics he had cheered to the echo half an hour before—a voice broke out of the dense crowd of departing members, with an earnest remonstrance to us:—

“ Oh, gentlemen ! one word for Poland ! ”

And, accordingly, we had not only one, but many words for Poland, while we stood in disarray around, hat in hand :

“ And often took leave, but were loth to depart ! ”

At this dinner there was, according to the curious custom of English public dinners, a lusty-voiced, red-faced, white-waistcoated waiter, stationed behind the Chairman to repeat the toasts, as announced by the latter ; and this duty he performed with powerful lungs and great emphasis, if not due discretion.

“A thorough Reform of the Irish Church!” said the chairman.

“Gentlemen, please to charge your glasses—are you full?—A thorough *Ree*-form of the *Hirish Church*!” &c. &c.

It was of this worthy or one of his fellows that the story went at the time, that at a City dinner, where the Foreign Ministers were complimented, he rendered the toast of—

“The Ottoman Porte and the Turkish Ambassador!”

in a manner that somewhat astonished the wine-abhorring Moslemin, viz.—

“*A bottle of Port for the Turkish Ambassador!*”

Lord Stanley, when mounted on his hobby-horse, to run a-tilt (or rather *a-muck*) against Ireland, gave us some of the most excited and angry scenes then, or at any time, to be witnessed.

Wherever Ireland was concerned, he indeed showed himself—

“Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer!”

and, to confess the truth, there was no want of a corresponding spirit on the part of the Irish popular members in meeting him. But he had the advantage of the then united, well-disciplined, and powerful host of the Tory or "Conservative" members, shouting as if life depended on it at every point that he made; while his Irish respondents had but the uncertain and scattered "Hear, hear!" of a portion of their own party; with now and then a faint cheer from their English friends, not unlike Dickens' description of those which greeted Squeers on his return to Dotheboys Hall, namely, "sighs of extra strength, with the chill on!"

To an Irishman there was something very melancholy, to an Englishman (or, at least, to an Englishman of the common stamp,) something very amusing, in these hot debates about Ireland. Not an assertion was dropped by an Irish member on one side, but it was immediately contradicted upon the other. Not a violent expression, or gesture, but had its counterpart, with interest. And while we Irishmen fought, and blackened each other, and rose higher and higher towards *boiling point*, the English members looked on as the Spartans of old at the riotings of their Helots,

and asked each other, with looks of pitying contempt, "Is it not well for such men as these to have us to take care of them?"

Something similar occurs at this day; though not to the degree that it did during the "ten years' war." The division and mutual opposition among Irish representatives is, indeed, as great, although the parliamentary quarrels are not so violent. It is an unworthy and a hollow triumph that England has in our divisions: unworthy, because based upon the principle that the best means of maintaining English supremacy is by encouraging and fomenting bitterness, hate, and strife, amongst us; hollow, because it is not in the nature of things that this mode of ruling us should endure.

Sooner or later, (in such times of European convulsion and Irish general destitution as the present, it may be *very* soon,) the madness of our intestine divisions will be acknowledged by us all, and their sole and certain result of leaving us more and more at the mercy of England, will be universally seen and declared. The necessity of union amongst ourselves, even on the narrowest basis of self-interest, will come to be avowed as

openly, as it is clearly and indisputably recognised already. And then will cease the pitiable spectacle we now present to the world, of a representation divided against itself, and thereby neutralising each other's efforts to discharge properly the high trusts committed to us, and advance the interests of our common country. *May this soon be!*

Of all subjects to be made a question of party, that of Railways would appear the strangest! and yet, a party question it was made, and a violent party question also, about the period I am writing of.

The occasion was the proposition by the Whig Government, of a large, general plan for the construction and establishment of Railways in Ireland. It originated with the late Mr. Drummond, of whose abilities and labours it would indeed be a work of supererogation to speak in praise.

It is well known that the labour which he voluntarily undertook, in preparing the way for this abortive proposition of the hampered and *badgered* Government to which he belonged, had a very great part in shortening his valuable life.

In general there are no two ideas more incon-

gruous than those of an active and trusted official in Dublin Castle, of the English Government, and a friend to Ireland and her people.

Mr. Drummond was that *rara avis*. He *did* love Ireland and her people. He really entered into their feelings. There are in the public documents he so laboriously, elaborately, and painfully drew up, expressions which jar a little with the sentiments which some of us *extravagant Repealers and Irishmen* entertain as to our country and our countrymen. There are also statements as to the material condition of Ireland, which are utterly and wildly inconsistent with what we knew and know to have been the facts at the time; and also predictions as to the *then future*, which, that future being now *our past*, all parties must acknowledge it to have failed in realising.

But allowing for all these drawbacks—and they are wonderfully small in comparison with the real value, and established facts, of his Report; as well as in comparison with the *enormous lying* of previous and subsequent Secretaries,—there is a manly, a generous, and really a *devoted* spirit pervading the Report, which must recommend him to the heart of every Irish reader.

In paying a just, though small tribute to the memory of this lamented gentleman, at least an equal justice should be rendered to the nobleman under whom he acted, the Marquis of Normanby, then Lord-lieutenant of Ireland.

Other noblemen have gone to fill that important office with intentions, probably, quite as pure and good as those of Lord Normanby. That they were few in number, is, unhappily, certain; but that such there were, although few and far between, in the long and dark array of hostile governors, is equally indisputable.

But it may be confidently affirmed, that no other occupant of the office, ever since its first institution, so well, so consistently, and so perseveringly *carried out* those good intentions as Lord Normanby. He exposed himself thereby to a thousand calumnies, and a thousand petty, but audacious insults from the Orange-Tory party in Ireland; and to sneers, coldnesses, and assaults of all kinds, even from men of his own party, as well as from opponents, in Great Britain.

It has been said of the Irish, that the misgovernment and ill-treatment of every description to which they have for centuries been subjected, has

inveterately implanted suspicion and distrust in their natures. Whether it be a corresponding effect upon their rulers, or merely another proof that,

“ They never pardon, who have done the wrong,”

certain it is that English governors of Ireland have generally gone over there, and acted while there, with a strong distrust of the people.

Such was not the case with Lord Normanby. He threw himself on the Irish people with a generosity of confidence to which they were not slow in making response. He entered into their feelings, he proved to them his sympathies, he listened kindly and patiently to all their complaints, and to the very utmost extent that the scant power of a Lord-lieutenant to act of himself, and by himself, permitted, he gave redress, relief, and justice.

For the first time for many, many years, the Irish people during his vice-royalty began to entertain confidence in the administration of the law—that confidence, without which it is vain and idle to expect that there will be respect and veneration for the law. They saw their petty local oppressors checked and reprov'd, the minor

officials of the Government compelled to give them protection and do them justice, instead of aiding and abetting in the small tyrannies attempted upon them; and, what they relished best of all, a spirit of impartiality and thorough fairness pervading and marking the distribution of favours and advantages, repressions and punishments.

“There is no people on the earth,” said Sir John Davies, Attorney-General in Ireland, to King James the First, “*who do so love equal and impartial justice, as the Irish, even when it be executed against themselves!*”

To the Marquis of Normanby the people of Ireland still look with that warmth of affectionate confidence that they ever show to those who take the trouble to earn it: no *great* trouble; as the evidence of sincere good-will is accepted by them readily, where the power to *do* much in proof of that good-will is wanting. They are persuaded that if he held office in England, the policy of the Whig Government towards them and their unfortunate country would be of a very different character from that with which they have been afflicted during the last two years; and that an attempt, at least, would be made to redeem some

of the promises and pledges which were so profusely made in opposition.

In short, that something of the same spirit that was shown towards Ireland when *he* had influence in the councils of the Whig Government before, would again be manifested; and the *faineance* or hostility which have alternately prevailed since the Whigs recovered power, *or had it put into their hands again*, in 1846, would give way to kindness, earnestness, and justice.

The general plan of railways for Ireland, which has been mentioned as originating with the estimable and truly able Under-Secretary, Mr. Drummond, in 1836-37, was very bitterly, and indeed inveterately assailed upon its introduction to the House, not on its own indisputable merits, but on the merits, or *demerits*, of the Ministry who sanctioned, and the parties who supported and advocated it.

Amongst the most forward of its assailants were Irish members: according to the almost fatality with which poor Ireland is cursed, of ever finding her worst enemies among her own children. Witnessing the vehemence with which they resisted it, one would have supposed that railways were

the *facilis descensus* of *popery, slavery, and wooden shoes*, against which the Orange shibboleth of “the glorious, pious, and immortal memory” protesteth, in good set terms, and specifically as regards all the items just mentioned !

England might have escaped much of the terrible mischiefs of the years 1845-46, in their “speculation *run mad*,” had the experiment been made which was proposed by the Whig Government in 1837. Something like just ideas would have been arrived at, by, if not before, the year 1845, of the probable cost and returns of a railway; and *invaluable* experience as to the making and working, in all their small and multitudinous, but very important details, would certainly have been available.

Improvements in engines, &c. such as have now been attained only after most costly experiments by private parties, would doubtless have been earlier and cheaper attained. And not the least important matter would have been the saving of a large portion of the enormous sums lavished in contests between rival companies, who would never have incurred such wild expenses, could they have tested their golden visions by the practical experience of the Irish railways.

The returns to the State could not have failed of being productive, at least to a fully compensating extent. The *plant* of the railway once existing, abundance of private companies would have been found to take it up on lease, if the Government chose to let the management out of their own hands.

In the case of the Dublin and Kingstown Railway, a year or two before the date of the Government general plan for Irish railways, a not inapt instance was given of how little the working of railways was understood in those times. The Bill in this case was, after a long and hard conflict, carried only by reason of the conviction at length established in the minds of the Committee, that the railway *would pay* by the facilities it would give for the *carriage of coals* up to Dublin, and thus cover *even the losses* by the cost of the passenger traffic !

The railroad in question is now made and in operation eleven or twelve years; its shares are, and have been for a long time, at a very considerable premium; and while it counts its *passengers* by the million, the coal bags have been only what have supplied its engines on their multitudinous journeys throughout the day.

* The excellent public officer of this worthy and deservedly prospering company gave the most succinct and sufficient answer which was received by the authorities of the Board of Trade, when after the horrible catastrophe that occurred in May 1840, on the Versailles "Left Bank" Railroad, queries were officially distributed to the various Railway Companies of the United Kingdom, to ascertain if the practice of locking the doors of the carriages, which caused so fearful an aggravation of the horrors of that catastrophe, was enforced by them.

"The doors of the carriages of this company," said the answer of the Dublin and Kingstown Railway official, "are *never* locked; and *one* reason is, that there are *no locks to them!*"

After such a reason it will be allowed, as in the old story of the eighteen reasons for not firing a salute, that there was no necessity to go further with the explanation.

The elections of 1837, on the dissolution of Parliament caused by the death of William the Fourth in that year, and the accession of her present Most Gracious Majesty, went off much quieter than those at the previous general election,

that of 1835. They were not, however, without a very liberal allowance of heat, bitterness, bribery, and corruption of their own.

The Queen Dowager—or, as at one of those elections in Ireland a fervid orator denominated her, the Queen *Dowager*—had her name dragged into the contest by a portion of the Conservative party, with more zeal for “a *good cry*” than respect for her feelings and position.

We were all *half mad* with joy in unfortunate Ireland at her Majesty's accession. That William the Fourth had, during his latter years, exchanged his indifference towards Ireland for a more active, but not a more favouring disposition, was a fact which, as well as its unfortunate cause, was well known to us; and to it we attributed as much of the delays and imperfections of the policy towards Ireland as were not openly and manifestly caused by the embittered and vindictive feeling against our country, which prevailed at that time among the English public.

We confidently expected that the new reign would be a new era to us, and that the Whig Ministry, released from the serious impediment and restraint of royal displeasure, would have

been able to realize some of the fair promises made in 1834, when the Repeal Question was in debate. But their majority was too fast wearing away, and their unpopularity with the English people — who, as Poulett Thompson afterwards said, “*did not care a rush for Irish hobby-horses,*” *i. e.* for measures of justice and kindness to Ireland—was too fast increasing, to give them any real increase of liberty of action ; and so we were disappointed.

In that disappointment, however, Ireland has always recognised that her Sovereign had no share ; and throughout all the vicissitudes that have since occurred, and all the additional misfortunes heaped upon the unhappy Irish people, through the continuance of misgovernment, whether by Conservative or Whig, they have ever looked towards the Throne with confiding affection and undiminished trust : happy in the belief that its illustrious occupant desires their welfare and happiness, while deprived by the Constitution of the power herself to advance it, and to restrain and correct the ill-treatment they have received at the hands of the “tyrant majority” of their English fellow-subjects.

“ Spare, oh spare, my *English* subjects !” was the cry of one of her predecessors, James the Second, when, at an early period of the battle of the Boyne, the Irish army seemed to be prevailing, and to be carrying death into the ranks of King William.

“ Spare, oh spare, my *Irish* subjects !” those Irish subjects have often thought that her Majesty has exclaimed, when some fresh outburst of disgraceful bigotry, political and religious, excited in Great Britain for party purposes, threatened more than ordinarily our scant measure of remaining liberties and rights.

Throughout the limited duration of the new Parliament of 1837, viz. from August in that year till June 1841, the Whig Ministry may be said to have been *in their agony*—dying by inches.

Their majorities slowly, but steadily frittered away,—

“ One by one, and two by two,”

and the exultations and *outré* of their opponents proportionably, or perhaps *over-proportionably* increased.

Upon the question of suspending for a time the political privileges of the refractory planters of

Jamaica, the ministry were out for a short time in 1839, in consequence of a defeat in the Commons. The whole circumstances connected with that occurrence, and the manner of their restoration to office, are too well known to require recapitulation here.

Having to bring over my family from Paris, I availed myself of the interval of parliamentary inaction, which usually marks and accompanies a ministerial interregnum, to go to that city. And the journey was not without adventure.

The Calais steamer, in which I took passage the morning after the resignation of the Whigs, left London Bridge about 9 A.M., and made a slow and wearisome passage down the river. The day was cloudy, and there was a strong breeze from the northward of east, which by the time we were off Margate had increased to a heavy gale, drawing at the same time more to the northward, so as to make Calais nearly a dead lee shore. The skipper prudently got the vessel's head round; and running back some distance, came to an anchor for the night at the back of Margate sands.

It was quite evident that he and his crew did not like our position; for there seemed a certain

confusion and nervousness about them, and a trifling incident gave what I thought a strong proof of this. An unfortunate spaniel with her pups was stowed in one of the quarter boats, under a piece of canvass; and as evening drew in, cold, wet, and stormy, I, who happened to be alone on the quarter-deck at the moment, called to a sailor in the waist to suggest that the whining and starving animals should be removed to some more comfortable position.

“Is this a time,” said he to me, fiercely enough, “to be thinking about dogs, when we don’t know if we shall save our own lives?”

With this pleasant and comforting response I descended to the cabin, where, after recommending the poor family in the quarter-boat to the tender mercies of the steward, the best thing to be done was to “*turn in*,” and try to sleep away the time.

Next morning it blew harder than before; and throughout that long day we remained at anchor, riding tolerably quietly from about half-ebb to half-flood, but jumping and sheering about at other times, and occasionally rolling in not the pleasantest manner in the world. Ahead, the sea

was breaking over the banks, and tossing its broken waters confusedly in upon us; overhead was the dull leaden sky, blotted by the hurrying "scud," and occasionally by a heavier collected cloud than common; while astern stretched the low, uninteresting and inhospitable shore of Kent, not a whit less uncheering in aspect, and having more of real peril about it than the unquiet element in which we so uneasily rode.

There were not many passengers, and of these nearly all appeared to be of the same party; respectable business people, entirely and properly occupied with their own little affairs, and evidently quite accustomed to the *trajet* between London and Calais. The *outsiders* were an officer going to rejoin his regiment in India, and who, for the major part of the time, was too much engaged with his regrets to pay attention to anything else; and an individual whose class or calling it was difficult to guess at, but who seemed one that had been knocked about a good deal through Europe, and was fit—

"——— to daff the world aside,
And bid it pass."

With this person, or anon with the captain, or eke

the mate, I paced the wet deck during the long day, often making a mental contrast between the wild, dreary and desolate scene around, and the busy stirring debate of excited and overcrowded partisans in the midst of which I had been not very many hours before.

Sentimentalities and meditations were, however, put to flight by the plain, prosaic, and very disagreeable fact, that provisions were falling short! The voyage is usually one of eleven or twelve hours, and we had already been aboard some twenty-eight or twenty-nine. There were accordingly threatenings of a "southerly wind in the bread bag," and a certain diplomacy was required to secure a dinner. In this my travelled friend was eminently useful; and he and I dined comfortably at three o'clock, while our *cabin-mates*, who preferred a later hour, had to *mess* off sailor's beef or "*salt horse*" and biscuit.

Another night of weary tossing, and mental as well as physical uneasiness, and at last, about half-past nine on the next morning, more than forty-eight hours since leaving London Bridge, we got under weigh once more, and ran, through a tremendous sea, for Calais. The gale had

broken, but it still blew very strong, and the conflict of meeting tides and sea off Calais made our approach and entry to that port of exceeding difficulty and not a little danger. The sun was shining out brightly upon the broken water and white ridges of foam, extending round us far as we could see, and upon our wet and rolling deck, with its clusters of woe-begone, terrified passengers, and anxious seamen. Four of the latter were straining at the wheel; while either jetty-head was crowded with shore-going people, expecting to see the wreck of "*le steamer Anglais*;" and with pilots and fishermen more humanely intent on making an effort to "pick us up," should the difficult manœuvre of sheering the lengthy and unhandy craft short in, happen to fail, and the inevitable consequence follow, of our being hove in upon the sand to leeward.

A day quite as weary and heavy as its predecessor, but not dignified like it with danger, wore away in the dull streets of Calais; and at last, on the third morning after leaving London, I got *en route* for Paris. My companion in the *coupé* of the Diligence was a French officer of the Calais garrison, a middle-aged, plain, and brusque-man-

nered man, with no other subject of conversation but military matters and his own personal history. He informed me that he had been in the *gardes de corps* up to the time of the Revolution of July 1830, (the Revolution *last but one*,) and in about an hour afterwards dilated with great unction upon the pleasure he anticipated from visiting Paris, where *he had not been* since about the time of Napoleon's first abdication.

At one of the night-stages we were astounded with the news that Paris was in full revolt, or full *émeute*; a pleasant piece of intelligence for a man who had his family there. All kinds of rumours met us at each successive stage, until we stopped to breakfast. Here the *gendarmes* of the district appeared to have set their faces not alone against the *émeutiers*, but against all mention of them; for a person to whom I had addressed a casual question on the subject, was nearly taken into custody for presuming to give me a civil answer. But the approach of the "*down*" Diligence soon gave the means of satisfying our inquiries.

Choosing a passenger, whom, by those indescribable tokens that one learns to distinguish on

the Continent I rightly guessed to be an Englishman, I quickly learned from him that the insurrection had not lasted more than a few hours, and was thought to be all over by that time; and in return he asked—

“What news from England?”

“Oh,” said I, “the Whig ministry are out. They have been beaten on the Jamaica question, and immediately resigned.”

“Oh,” replied he, “we had *that* news *two days ago*. Where on earth have you been since? *Don't you know they're in again?*”

I found I was behind the time quite as much after the short sea voyage from London to Calais, as if after circumnavigating the globe a couple of times the *wrong* way, and had to be equally particular in inquiries to recover the lost ground, and correct my reckoning.

As we neared Paris, reports came rife and more rife of the renewal of the struggle, and of its having been joined by the population of the villages in the neighbourhood of the city. A question arose as to the chances of our progress being interrupted, and my military friend, in the exercise of a sound prudence, consented to adopt my

advice, and hide his uniform under a large travelling cloak which I lent him, and substitute a hat of mine for his schako. And in this guise we rolled and clattered into Paris from the northern road, and traversed the Boulevards and several busy streets, threading our way with difficulty through the strong patrols of National Guards whom we met at every turn—

“ Fire in each eye, and musquets in the hand ! ”

anxiously looking out for the perturbators who were “frighting the soul of fearful commerce” with their alarums.

Every “*Place*” was crowded with the regular soldiery, arms stacked, fires lighted, and a regular bivouac established; and the Carrousel, which I had to traverse on my way from the coach office, was covered with military of all arms, as the French phrase it—heavy and light cavalry, infantry, and a large force of artillery; with ammunition wagons, &c. &c.

I had left England in the midst of an attempted political change of importance and great national interest. I found Paris occupied with a similar attempt, but by most dissimilar means. The

comparison, it is needless to say, was all in favour of the former. Parliamentary majorities and party votes may have much about them both in their origin and employment that is base, corrupt, and unworthy; but their results are much less productive of immediate evil and misery, and far more capable of being ultimately turned to real and enduring good, than those which are achieved by violence, and cursed with the stain of blood.

It was to the Parliament of 1837-41, that Mr. Hume was elected an Irish Representative. The "Faire Citie" of Kilkenny took him as their choice, and returned him without a canvass—without even personal attendance—and entirely without expense. So determined were the good men and true of Kilkenny to do their work *clean*, that the very postage of the letter, (1*s.* 7*d.* in those antediluvian days, while yet the penny postage *was not*,) announcing to him his unanimous return, on the introduction and recommendation of Daniel O'Connell, was paid by them.

In 1839 they were much disgusted at the vote he gave with the Tory party, in favour of the but *half-weaned* slave-holders of Jamaica. The vote imperilled, as already mentioned, the then Whig

Ministry ; and threatened to deprive Ireland of the administrative benefits with which that Ministry were inclined to make some compensation for their want of power to effect legislative ameliorations.

The Kilkenny men sent over a Deputation to remonstrate with Joseph Hume. They were exceedingly and very constitutionally indignant with his refusal to yield to their remonstrances, and his utter impassibility to their suggestions and instances that he ought to resign his seat.

But he shocked their ideas even more. While seated with them, one of his servants announced "*Luncheon !*" on which announcement their member took occasion to *bow them out*, making not the least proffer of that hospitality which in Ireland covereth a multitude of sins.

With Mr. Hume's considerable business abilities and admirable perseverance, it is singular of how little comparative weight he is in the House, or in the estimation of the public. Few men have so perseveringly advocated a particular question as Mr. Hume that of financial economy ; fewer still have carried so much of the question to which they wedded themselves ; but yet fewer

have got so little credit for their exertions and success.

It is true that financial matters are not attractive to the general reader or general public, and that great merits and services may be exhibited in that line without securing anything like an adequate acknowledgment. But Mr. Hume possesses the additional recommendation of a multitude of honest votes upon other questions, as well as on those of a financial nature. Indeed, with the exception of a few *queer* votes in his earlier years of parliamentary life, and the sad and constant exception of West India slavery questions, he has ever shown himself the friend of reform and popular enfranchisement.

What, then, can be the reason of his comparatively trifling weight in the public mind, but especially in the House? To a large extent it is undoubtedly to be attributed to his want of an aristocratic position and following; a want which it would require nothing short of a sweeping revolution to do away with in England, and which, even after such an event, would be sure somehow or other to re-appear before long. Among a people of the habits and tendencies of the English,

Mr. Hume's other main deficiency—that of anything beyond a plain, business-like, plodding ability, which never rose to the rank of talent—will make up the rest of the account.

His speeches, while full of valuable matter, are so defective in arrangement and manner, and sometimes so unmercifully lengthy, as to fatigue attention; and, although the graces of delivery are so little cultivated, or at any rate with such little success, by the majority of the accustomed debaters of the House, that no peculiar censure should attach to him, yet hence arises another disadvantage. And there is the additional unlucky circumstance of occasionally giving her Majesty's faithful but most mischief-loving Commons occasion for a horse-laugh, when, in the earnestness of his honesty of purpose and of mind, he does not wait to measure or consider his expressions, but uses the first disjointed form of words that happens to come to his lips.

On one occasion he asked across the House, of Sir R. Peel's ministry, then in power, for some papers connected with foreign affairs, which he had vainly solicited from the preceding Administration. The papers were, however, refused again

to him, on the ground of public inconvenience, and the propriety of respecting the secrets of office. This highly excited his indignation; and, after dilating for some time on the practice of one Ministry screening, as he said, the *piccadillies* (*sic*) of another, he concluded, *impressively*, as follows:

“Depend upon it, Sir, wherever there is *delicacy*, there is always something wrong!”

In the discussions on the Orange system in 1835-1836, Mr. Hume took an active, and, as usually happens with him, a manly and an honest part. Here again, however, his excitement betrayed his tongue. Mr. Sheil, alluding to the disclaimer of a certain personage of very high rank, that he had been aware of the fact of his name being at the foot of warrants for the creation of Orange lodges, which had been distributed in some of the regiments of the line, had said—

“When I am called upon to give credit to this disclaimer, I take refuge in one of the *dicta* of my creed, and I say, ‘*Credo quia impossibile!*’”

To this Mr. Hume appended the following free translation:

“Like the honourable member who has preceded me, I say, in reference to this denial, ‘*Credo*

quia impossibile,—‘*Let who will believe it—I will not!*’ ”

And upon a yet more remote occasion, when some intolerance on the part of a ministerial majority drew from him a sharp, well-merited, and effective rebuke, he upset his own good work by the tremendous task that he marked out for himself, with regard to the 658 members of the House, when, at the end of his speech, he exclaimed—

“ Sir, *I blush for them!* ”

There cannot be a question, that to blush for the whole House of Commons at once was a Titanic task, above even his powers of face; but it was something to have even attempted it.

But whatever may at a chance moment be said in haste or mistake by him, or whatever may be remarked in levity or in party spite *of* him, this much is certain, that he has done good service to the State in his long and useful career in Parliament.

And it does *not* bespeak a wholesome state of feeling in the English public mind, that so true and staunch a man should not have a following, and a good *back* in-doors and outside.

Alas! that I should, in Joe Hume's case, as well as in that of Mr. Brotherton, have to add a postscript at the end of the session of 1849. Poor Ireland came in for hard knocks at his hand. The Irish people were included by him in the same category of *unmercifulness* as the Negro slaves! Lord Clarendon's most outrageously unconstitutional, and most wantonly aggressive letter of February last had no heartier nor stouter *backer-up* than Joseph Hume! He who had, during his time, protested against all species of Coercion Acts, *Gagging Bills*, and repressive measures of all kinds, threw in with the Ministry this session, and harked them on to the disgraceful task of violating the constitution. It was in vain to argue with him—in vain to remonstrate;—Ireland should be tyrannized over; all former acts and pledges were to be regarded as nought; oppression was to be given its full way.

The infliction of the measure of coercion to which I refer, namely, the second suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, has been passed over in Ireland with an ominous and a brooding silence. Assuredly it is not forgotten. Assuredly it will yet bring forth most bitter fruit. Assuredly it is

one more earnest to us of the deep, undying, inveterate international dislike and aversion that prevails in the English mind towards Irishmen; and its having been proposed by what are called “Liberal” ministers, and mainly carried by the support of a “Liberal” majority, have gone far to confirm the deep-rooted impression in the Irish mind, that from England, or from Englishmen, of whatever class, creed, stamp, or party, it is utterly vain to expect any good for Ireland; and that it is only when we are active, and stirring, and asserting ourselves, that they will withhold their hands from increasing our fetters and our restrictions.

Well and truly did my father remark, in the preface of his book, “Ireland and the Irish,” as follows:—

“It has pleased the English people in general to forget all the facts in Irish history. They have been also graciously pleased to forgive themselves all those crimes. And the Irish people would forgive them likewise, if it were not that much of the worst spirit of the worst days still survives.”*

In the same way and the same spirit it has pleased the English members (with a few, and but

* “Ireland and the Irish,” preface, p. viii.

a few exceptions, and Joe Hume certainly *not* amongst them,) this session to forget all the wrongs of Ireland, and all the facts of her ill treatment and misgovernment, and to give themselves entire absolution for the share which, by their parliamentary votes, they themselves had in continuing and aggravating them. It is for *us, the injured*, to forgive; and we shall be ready to do so, when we shall see any *real* intention of reparation on the part of our boasted Liberal allies in the English House of Commons.

CHAPTER XII.

QUESTION OF REPEAL.—DANIEL O'CONNELL.—AGITATION MOVEMENTS.
—THE GENERAL ASSOCIATION.—PRECURSOR ASSOCIATION.—RECOM-
MENCEMENT OF AGITATION.—MR. DANIEL O'CONNELL RETIRES TO
DARRYNANE.—DIFFICULTY OF FINDING A DEPUTY.—MAUVAISE
HONTE.—LETTERS OF DANIEL O'CONNELL.—IRISH MANUFACTURE
MOVEMENT.—RESTRICTIONS ON TRADE.—MR. MOONEY'S PROPOSITION.

THE year 1840 witnessed the termination of the experiment of British legislation which my father had consented to make in 1834. In that year, as noted in another chapter, his demand for Repeal had been met by a decided rejection, so far as Repeal was concerned; but that much ought to be done for Ireland, and that much *should* be done, was the main burthen of the answer to him.

I have already alluded to the circumstances that induced, or, to say truth, *compelled* him to put these fair expressions and promises to the test.

Never could there have been anything more perilous for him, as to his popularity and influence

in Ireland, than his deciding to make this experiment. Popular opinion is capricious and intolerant of delays, and he who essays with it a Fabian policy, must make up his mind for many a rub and many a suspicion.

Mr. O'Connell felt the effects of this impatience and suspicion to the latest moment of his life. It is said, indeed, of the Irish, that the long series of misgovernment and ill-treatment of every kind to which they have been subjected during centuries, has made them peculiarly prone to suspicion and distrust; and there is undoubtedly much truth in the remark. He had the full measure of both discharged upon his head, and not all that he could do by his utmost endeavours, during the seven succeeding years ere death snatched him from his labours, could entirely remove the species of apprehension that hung over the public mind in Ireland with regard to his final perseverance in the great cause to which he had devoted himself.

And yet, if ever there were man devoted to a cause, Daniel O'Connell was devoted to Repeal! From the earliest period that he could form a judgment on public matters, down to his latest

gasp at Genoa, he was a convinced, determined, devoted Repealer. His epitaph is not yet written; but if more than his simple name is to be upon his monument, it should be the inscription himself proposed:—

“ HE DIED A REPEALER ! ”

Instead of fulfilling the fair promises of 1834, the year 1840 found the British legislature busily engaged in forging fresh chains for Ireland! The successive Bills for the amelioration and extension of her parliamentary franchise which the Whig Ministry had brought in from 1834 up to and including 1840 itself, had all been contumeliously rejected, or their authors compelled to allow them to drop; and not only had this occurred, but a bill *restrictive* of our already too limited and defective franchise was in this session (after being defeated in the preceding, as well as in that of 1837,) read a second time in despite of the opposition of the Ministry.

The agitation immediately recommenced. In April of that year, Mr. O'Connell went over to Dublin, and invited to the new struggle his companions of the old Catholic agitation, as well as of all the intermediate movements.

Of these movements there were several, with something of the following designations and history:—

1st. “The Society for the Improvement of Ireland.”

This was got up in the first heat of the success of Peel’s Catholic Emancipation measure, by several well-meaning theorists and castle-builders of various parties, who had been momentarily united on the great question just then carried. Mr. O’Connell attended it in no great hopes of any good resulting from it, but desirous to show that he was ready to co-operate in any thing, or with any one, for even the shadow of a benefit to Ireland.

After some weeks of inoffensive existence, a wanton murder was committed upon this innocent Society by a Lord Lieutenant’s proclamation, under the “Algerine Act” against popular bodies, passed in 1829.

Then came the scanty gatherings at the “Parliamentary Intelligence Office” in Stephen Street, Dublin. This was little more than a mere newspaper and conversation-room, where Mr. O’Connell used to talk over past labours and future prospects

with some of the other noted agitators, and whither he used to address his public letters when in London attending Parliament. Upon this also a murder by proclamation was committed, nearly as wantonly and quite as ruthlessly.

Then came in quick succession three other innocents, put an end to by similar means while yet in swaddling-clothes, viz. :—

“ THE FRIENDS OF IRELAND OF ALL RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS.”

“ THE IRISH SOCIETY FOR LEGAL AND LEGISLATIVE RELIEF, OR ANTI-UNION ASSOCIATION.”

“ THE IRISH VOLUNTEERS OF 1782.”

Came next the “*Public Breakfasts*,” of which I have spoken in a former chapter, and which were held at Homes’s Hotel on the Quays. These also did a Proclamation slay.

The “Algerine Act” of 1829 expired in 1831, and thereupon arose no less than two popular bodies, viz. :—

The “NATIONAL POLITICAL UNION,” and

The “TRADES POLITICAL UNION :”—

Both had for their main end and object the Repeal of the Act of Union.

The third “Algerine Act,” viz. the Coercion

measure of 1833, enabled the Government to recommence the warfare against agitation, and these new bodies died the same deaths as their predecessors. Coercion becoming once more threadbare towards the end of 1834, Mr. O'Connell got up the "Anti-Tory Association," which in the succeeding year gave place to the "Petition-Committee;" the latter in its turn yielding, in 1836, to the "General Association of Ireland."

A strange hallucination having come over that small, crotchetty, and scarcely tangible party in Ireland, who call themselves Whigs, that they would do wonders for the Liberal cause, if only allowed a clear stage, Mr. O'Connell determined to give it to them, and with it every aid in his power, that the world might see what stuff they were made of.

Accordingly, the "General Association" went down, and the "Central Registration Board" arose, and dawdled on most well-behavedly and most insipidly until people forgot to think or ask about it, or attend to it at all, and so it fell asleep and dreamed itself out of existence.

Then came the "Precursor Association, for full and prompt justice to Ireland, or Repeal." It

was with reference to the management and affairs of this Association that the unhappy differences occurred between Mr. Purcell and Mr. O'Connell, of which sufficient mention has been already made.

The artificer and founder of all these various associations had now reached the penultimate step in his experiment of "Justice to Ireland," as promised in 1834. From the first he had not put faith in that promise; knowing well that the inevitable predominance and paramount influence of English prejudices, passions and mistaken interests, would defeat the faint good intentions of the Whigs, and give the lie direct to the professions of other parties to the vote of April 1834. But having then resolved to make the experiment, he had resolutely carried it out so long as he possibly could; and now by the name of the new body, (viz. "*Precursor*,") indicated that the time was fast approaching when that experiment should end; worse than total failure having attended it, in the fresh encroachments now attempted upon the restricted and diminishing franchise of Ireland.

However, so strong an instance was made to him to allow of another *mere-whig* effort, that he consented to suspend for a few months the

decisive step he was about to take; in order that a new "*Reform Registry Association*" should parade its sickliness and feebleness on the political stage, and endeavour to excite some sympathy with Ireland in the assault then being so hotly urged against her by Lord Stanley.

The *end* came. Lord Stanley succeeded early in the spring of 1840 in getting his penal and restrictive measure passed the second reading. Several *English Whigs* deserted their party and the cause of poor Ireland, and voted with him. There could no longer be a delusion upon the mind of any man. Justice would *not* be done. Injustice—flagrant, undisguised, unblushing—was being inflicted upon her. The Imperial Parliament had been once more fully tried, and found wanting—wanting to reason, to justice, and to its own solemn pledges. The proof had been once more given that, in the words of Daniel O'Connell's maxim:—

"*Ireland never yet trusted but she was betrayed!*"

There was no longer the shadow of a hope for her, but in her own exertions. My father, therefore, threw aside for ever all further trials and experiments, and belief in English political pro-

mises, and shook out and waved to his fellow-countrymen and the world, the banner of Repeal!

There rallied to him immediately some few of the ancient leaders of agitation. But death, and (still worse) *place*, or the prospect of place, had committed wild havoc among the old staff; and their vacancies were scantily and inadequately supplied by younger and unpractised men. The people, however, were ready and true; and, wherever they could obtain the aid and benefit of local leading and marshalling, hastened to enrol themselves in his ranks.

It was remarked of Napoleon, that one of his chiefest difficulties in his later campaigns arose from the disinclination of his lieutenants to forego the comforts and enjoyments already won, for a repetition of their old hardships and dangers, on the chance of an increase of advantages.

The "*foremost men of all the*" Catholic agitators manifested pretty generally the same spirit and inclination; and Mr. O'Connell not being one of those who wait to have opportunities and helps created for them, but who determine to create such for themselves, went on, regardless of deser-

tions, and resolute to do his own duty to Ireland, whoever might abandon her.

Early in August he found himself in a difficulty. The infant Repeal Association had so far progressed in safety, because he had been able to attend its meetings himself, or to secure a faithful, talented, and most efficient representative of his opinions and principles in his secretary, Mr. O'Neill Daunt. But now he had to leave town for the indispensable relaxation of a few weeks at Darrynane Abbey, and Mr. Daunt's private affairs required his presence at his own home in the county of Cork. Who, then, was to be his mouth-piece and delegate?

In this dilemma, (and for some time it was a very perplexing dilemma,) I came out of *my shell*. Not out of an egg-shell; for I was too old a bird for that: but out of the *moral* shell, (if the phrase may be used,) in which take refuge the victims of morbid constitutional shyness, from the many rough rubs they are doomed to feel in life.

What the struggle in such cases may be, is a matter of no interest except to the individual sufferer; or perhaps in a remote degree to those who happen to be similarly cursed. Of all draw-

backs and difficulties to an unfortunate agitator, *mauvaise honte* is decidedly the heaviest; and as this demon can never be wholly *exorcised*, unless conquered in early life, the wight thus afflicted, who may be luckless enough to have politics and a public part *thrust* upon him, has to fight a new and severe battle on each new occasion for his coming forward.

Shortly after leaving school I had thought to oppose the proposition for dissolving the Catholic Association (in March, 1829), when that step was mooted at one of the usual weekly meetings of that body, and had got on my legs three times to make the opposition; but,

“Obstupui, steteruntque comæ; et vox faucibus hæsit!”

and that triumph of *sheepishness* at the outset was not recovered for eleven long years, and then and since but imperfectly.

Let me give one counsel to all who find this evil influence upon them at the outset of life, checking their energies, chilling their hearts, and impeding in every way their usefulness. *Fight against* it at first, if possible; but first or last, give it no quarter, for it will give you none.

It will cast as it were a spell about you, making you say and do often what you least would wish to have said or done; often again preventing you from words or actions that your judgment would recommend; teaching others to feel the distrust of your opinions and capacity that comes down like a bleak rain-cloud upon yourself at times, with or without cause or reason, proximate or remote; and too frequently condemning its victims to a more than ordinary experience of the disappointments, mortifications, regrets, and bitter-nesses of all kinds, which chequer the life of man.

I find the following letters from my father, among other memoranda of the year 1840, in connexion with the recommencement of the Repeal agitation in that year, and the establishment and early progress of the "Loyal National Repeal Association."

*" Merrion Square, Dublin,
April 29, 1840.*

" MY DEAREST JOHN,

* * * * *

"I am getting on famously with agitation. The *Repeal* will soon spread like wildfire.

"After Stanley's blow at our franchise, and the

manner in which the House of Commons has received it, who can doubt of the necessity of Repeal? It is true they have not passed his Bill *yet* ; but if they meant to redeem their pledges to Ireland, why should he have got the support he has. His bill is only postponed, and unless we rouse ourselves, he will succeed.

“ You will have seen the address I drew up for the Association—we are now *fairly launched*.

“ I leave in the early boat on Sunday night, and will be in the House on Monday night.

“ Your fond Father,

“ DANIEL O'CONNELL.”

The foregoing was written in the first fortnight after the Repeal, or “ *National Association*,” as it was at first simply denominated, had been set on foot.

The next extracts are of a date several months later in the same year, when, as before mentioned, I had volunteered to become his delegate during the period of his much needed relaxation at Darrynane Abbey. To such of his old friends as may chance to look over these pages, there will be interest in being reminded, by the minutiae of the directions and instructions in these letters, of the

activity, and as he would himself have said, the *efficiency* of his intellect, which neglected nothing, and left nothing to chance, when he had an object to carry, whether great or small.

The first is dated from his first stopping-place, on his journey from Dublin.

“ *Maryboro’, 9 o’Clock, Friday, Sept. 5, 1840.*

“ MY DEAREST JOHN,

“ We arrived here a quarter of an hour ago well and merry, *screeched** a great deal as we came along.

“ I want to write to you my directions.

“ 1st. Go to the office of the Dublin Evening Post, and get my paper of to-morrow, Saturday, directed to Limerick. Leave a *written* order to have it forwarded from to-morrow out to Darrynane Abbey.

“ 2d. Do exactly the like at the Monitor office.

“ 3d. Give *similar* orders at Johnson’s respecting the Sun.

“ 4th. Send the Morning Chronicle that arrives to-morrow, Saturday, to Limerick, thenceforward to Darrynane Abbey. By your reading the Chro-

* A playful expression for the cheering he had got.

nicle at my house, I will miss the Chronicle which will arrive in Dublin each Sunday, as you cannot forward it on *that* day, though Johnson could.

“ 5th. Send the Freeman and Register to-morrow to Limerick; afterwards to Darrynane Abbey.

“ 6th. Give directions to Johnson to forward the Examiner to Darrynane Abbey.

“ 7th. Send me one Tablet to Darrynane every arrival.

“ 8th. Send me Humphrey's Clock to-morrow to Limerick, afterwards to Darrynane.

“ You see what a quantity of commands I have. But that which I am most anxious about is that you should *cut a figure* at the Association. It is the best opportunity you could have to introduce yourself quietly and discreetly into public life, especially by showing yourself a man of business. The facility of being so will grow upon you, though you should feel awkward at first. I implore of you to try. Begin manfully on Monday.

* * * *

“ Ever, my own dear John,

“ Your fond Father,

“ DANIEL O'CONNELL.

“ JOHN O'Connell, Esq.”

“ *Limerick, Sept. 6, 1840.*

“ MY DEAREST JOHN,

* * * * *

“ You ought to have sent me the Morning Chronicle of Friday, which arrived yesterday. I know it came in time, because I got the Sun of that evening *via* Johnson & Co.

“ I send an address on the subject of the registries. I direct it to Ray. Go and read it before the meeting, so that you may read it *at* the meeting *legibly*, as K. M. said about reading the affidavit.

“ Move 1st. The admission of Doctor Cantwell, (Right Rev.) the Bishop of Meath; his diocese is the largest in Ireland. Pronounce the deserved eulogium on him without any contrast with others, which is always invidious.

“ 2d. Move the admission of Doctor Blake, (Right Rev.) the Bishop of Dromore. Speak of that good Prelate too as he deserves. Read his letter, move its insertion on the minutes, and that I be requested to send him a suitable reply.

“ 3d. Move the admission of your fair daughter.

“ Let the Secretary then read his correspondence carefully, so as to prevent confusion.

" As I wrote the above, your letter was sent to me. I am delighted with the account of your proceedings in Committee. Accept my blessing—go on and prosper. I see I can safely rely on you—you only want an opportunity of showing yourself. What about the Morning Chronicle? Look to that paper especially. I got Humphrey's Clock at Maryboro'.

" Ever your most tenderly fond Father,

" DANIEL O'CONNELL.

" John O'Connell, Esq.

" Call on Fitzpatrick, and tell him not to omit to send me the published papers respecting Ireland in the reign of Henry VIII. I want them at once."

" *Bahoss, Cahirciveen, Sept. 9, 1840. Wednesday.*

" MY DEAREST JOHN,

" I came here on Monday from Killarney. Morgan and *suite*, as the newspapers say, remained in Killarney that day for a stag hunt on the lake. They were pleased with the amusement, and came here yesterday in torrents of rain. I had excellent hunting in the morning; as good as ever

I had. To-morrow we go to Darrynane, (D. V.) I hunt on the way.

“ I got, and could get, the papers only of Monday, Dublin, *to-day*—that is, they were at Cahir-civeen at 12 last night. As I have those only of Monday, I cannot form any opinion save from your outline of the proceedings, (at the Association on that day,) but I like that outline much.

“ Attend as much as you can at the Committee. Give your best support to Ray, who is just the best man in his station I ever met with; beyond any comparison the best. Protect him from annoyance. There is a man of the name of —, who is a jealous and most unmanageable man; he endeavours to get others to annoy Ray. Shield the latter with temper and tact from all attacks.

“ Get the correspondence abbreviated; if Ray’s health permit him, he will do it well. The letters that come in during the meeting may be read, but not inserted in the newspapers until they are abbreviated. If necessary, form a Committee for abbreviation. Meet every evil with a remedy.

“ You have not sent me the Tablet. I must get that: if the one of Saturday last be missing, get

Johnson, the newspaper agent, to send to England for another.

“You have not sent me the Morning Chronicle of either Friday or Saturday. This annoys me the more, as I perceive by your letter that one of them contains a saucy article on *the Repeal*. I have had more disappointments about newspapers since I left Dublin this time than I ever had before. If possible, get me a Morning Chronicle with *that* article. Perhaps Ray could give it to you. But make me sure of a Tablet of Saturday last, the 5th instant.

“There is a most *answerable* article on the Repeal in the Sun of Saturday. What a pity that Barrett, of the Pilot, does not read and answer *these* articles occasionally!

“Give my love, &c. &c. &c.

“Ever, my dearest John,

“Your most affectionate Father,

“DANIEL O'CONNELL.”

“Darrynane Abbey, Sept. 11, 1840.

“MY DEAREST JOHN,

“I have got the Tablet I wanted; and all is now quite right. We arrived here yesterday, all

well. The new road splendidly beautiful. I hunted on the way, and had admirable running.

“Ray is mistaken. On the registries the title need not be shown. That is the *law*; but he is right that several Tory barristers require such production *against law*.

“I was greatly pleased with the proceedings of last Monday. *You* got on exceedingly well. I hope you will do as well next Monday. Determine on *making* topics to speak upon. You will delight me by *doing* business.

“Your paragraph in Ray’s admirable Report was just what it ought to be; clear, and satisfactory of its intended object.

* * * * *

“Your fond Father,

“DANIEL O’CONNELL.”

—————

“Darrynane Abbey, Sept. 14, 1840. Monday.

“MY DEAREST JOHN,

“Congratulate my darling ——— on the great accounts I get of your ——— and business habits. I am delighted with you, my darling child.

* * * * *

“I think you are right in making the experiment of abbreviating the letters before you put yourselves under any subsidy to the newspapers. I have always found schemes of subsidy fail. The public will, be assured, come round to the papers which give the *fullest* report. Everything that relates to Repeal has met an accumulating interest.

“Every letter you will mention the state of Ray’s health. How I hope that you will all get on well at this day’s meeting! I shall have no publication with the proceedings before Thursday. I am not sorry that the —— —— attacked you even with ridicule. It is a certain sign they think you worth frightening off the stage, if they can. But that they cannot do.

“I should write to Ray, but that I am writing to you. Let him and you set about getting signatures for the Limerick Provincial Meeting, from as many quarters as you can. Especially from Wexford county. If there are any persons whom I should specially write to, give me their names and addresses. Send from yourselves to Drogheda.

“I have had another day’s delightful hunting. The dogs ran down five hares in the wildest parts

of the mountains in noble style. The last, especially, was as fine a hunt as ever I saw. Morgan and his darling wife are quite well: she and her sister admire the place exceedingly.

* * * * *

“Your most fond Father,

“DANIEL O’CONNELL.”

“*Darrynane Abbey, Sept. 19, 1840.*

“MY DEAREST JOHN,

“I am still continuing highly pleased with your conduct, and mode of doing business. I have no doubt that it will be useful to you during life to have an opportunity of making yourself known.

“I proceed to answer your questions. First, Reynolds” [*Thomas*, the present “Marshal” of the Corporation of Dublin, and brother of the M.P. for that city, 1848-49,] “is right in saying that it is useful to have a petition to Parliament one subject of every meeting; but his case does not apply. It was an anti-Tithe* meeting case; and as they were for abolishing tithes, it was agreed that as they were not about to *petition*, they must intend

* Alluding to the prosecution of Mr. Reynolds and others, a few years before.

to abolish tithes by other, that is, by *illegal* means.

“Have, therefore, a petition in every case that you can; or, what will do as well, appoint a committee to prepare, and procure signatures to a petition. The prayer of every Repeal petition must for the present be simply, that the House may pass a Bill to Repeal the Act for the legislative Union of Great Britain and Ireland—nothing more.

“To the second question. I am as decided as ever I was in my life, that the plan to subsidize the newspapers by taking off a weekly quantity ought to be rejected. We had twenty such plans in the Catholic Association, and every one of them proved abortive. If even it were necessary to to give them money, I would do it in cash, and take no papers. Any papers gratuitously distributed have no other effect, save the raising of a belief that the parties do not think their own proceedings of sufficient value to be purchased. That which is given for nothing is supposed not to be better than the price.

“But, of course, I admit that our proceedings encumber those papers which insert them, even

in an abridged state. I also admit that it is very important to have the publication of what we do as ample as possible. The difficulty of getting the newspapers to publish in that manner may be got over by increasing our advertisements in the two morning papers and the Pilot. Let every Resolution passed by the Association be published,—that is, a substantial advertisement of each Association-day's Resolution, with the gross amount received from the last meeting. It will not be difficult thus to have a good advertisement after each meeting.

“ The Monday meeting—that is, the preliminary notice of it, may also, and I think should, be inserted in the morning papers of Saturday, as well as Monday, and in the Pilot of Friday. As we go along we shall have more occasions to advertize, and I will take care so to arrange when I go up to Dublin, that our advertisements shall be a good thing for the honest papers. They may rely on my promise, and do you in the mean time consult and see how you can augment the advertisements to compensate the papers that serve us. This is the proper way to assist the friendly press: Ray will be able to carry it into effect. Let it, if

possible, be done *at once*, for the deserving papers.

“The objection to the application of the Repeal funds to the Registry in Dublin county is not well-founded. It is not for Evans or Brabazon we are acting, but for the cause. We are not pledged to either of them; and it may, before the new registries are out, be necessary to put out both of these gentlemen. We are, I repeat, working for the cause; and I hope that we will soon have money enough to carry on the registries in every county in Ireland.

“At all events we are pledged to Dublin county for the next ensuing Registration session. I do therefore entreat that matters may go on as they are, until my return. I will then calmly and deliberately discuss the subject with the dissentients, and we will all endeavour to come to the right conclusion for the future. But I repeat that I understood—I may be mistaken, but I very distinctly understood—that no alteration in this matter should take place until my return. I repeat, that *then* the subject shall be perfectly open and unbiassed for the opinion of each member of the Committee.

“Your article was an excellent one.

“ I had a splendid day’s hunting on Thursday :
 we ran down five hares in the best style, and with
 long-continued running. * * * This
 being a fast-week I have not hunted since Thurs-
 day. * * * * *

“ Ever, my dearest John, &c. &c.

“ DANIEL O’CONNELL.

“ *P.S.*—Write articles for the papers as often
 as you can: short and pithy.”

“ *Darrynane Abbey, Nov. 21, 1840.*

“ MY DEAREST JOHN,

“ I wrote last night one word of advice respect-
 ing the ‘ Irish Manufacture’ meetings. I am very
 anxious you should do all in your power to help
 their promoters.

“ I now want to write you a few words on
 another subject; and by way of caution. I allude
 to the subject of *representation*.

“ In that excellent paper of yours, the address
 to the English people against the conduct of their
 press—an admirable address it is, and I am ex-
 ceedingly pleased with it—you, however, speak of
 our being supposed, as members of the Repeal

Association, to be *representatives* of the Irish people. True, you then disclaim that title, but you give us a qualified station in some degree of the same nature. Now your phrase is perfectly accurate in itself, and free from being fairly construed to claim any element of representation. But we would not get a fair construction.

“ We should have the unscrupulous Court of Queen’s Bench and an Orange jury, who would sign our conviction before they heard even the evidence for the prosecution.

“ What I want to impress upon your mind is this—the danger of our assuming *any species of representative capacity*.

“ We must always be *an original society*—emanating from no other body or class, and not responsible to any other body or class. Our danger in point of law is, lest we should be accused of being either *representatives* or *delegates*. Just keep this always in your mind: always disclaim unqualifiedly delegation or representation.

“ It is the Irish Convention Act which creates the danger; and the construction put upon that Act in Dr. Sheridan’s case enhances the danger.

“ You will not, my beloved John, mistake me ;

I say this to you not by way of reproach, but simply by way of caution. Your *only* reply is, to say you will bear my caution in mind. Say not one word in explanation of the past.

“ I also wish to advise you to volunteer your services at the Carlow election, and at the preceding agitation. Write down to Arthur French, or to Mr. Fitzgerald, who acts as secretary—Ray will give you his address—and offer any aid in your power to the success of Mr. Ponsonby’s election. Say that you will go about agitating, or working in any other way in which you could be useful.

“ Let these offers come as emanating from yourself, and not at all as suggested by me.

“ God bless my dearly loved John ! You are a —— and a —— to me. God Almighty bless you !

* * * * *

“ Your most fond Father,

“ DANIEL O’CONNELL.

“ It has been literally blowing *up* and *down* here. Such squalls, such *whirlwinds*—such rain, snow, storm, &c. I never witnessed. No mischief, however, blessed be God !”

"Darrynane Abbey, Dec. 4, 1840.

"MY DEAREST JOHN,

"I entirely approve of all you have done. You have my blessing, my esteem, and my cordial love.

"Recollect two things—First, that your business is, not to be disturbed by any body; not to mind what this one or that other said; and to conciliate every body, *good, bad*, and indifferent, without *yielding any principle*, and without failing to make the *good* perceive the preference of your kindness for them.

"Secondly: (with reference to the popular desire afloat for a joint-stock company of manufacturers, artisans, &c. in order to promote the manufacture and consumption of Irish goods,) recollect this; that in a joint-stock concern every contributor, even down as low as to him who contributes one shilling, is liable to the extent of his fortune or means, whatever that may be, for the debts and losses of such joint-stock concern.

"I doubt if one constituted on the basis proposed could be managed with economy and prudence. Be therefore cautious how you proceed. * * *

“Next, it is in my mind highly desirable to make no opposition to what may promote M——’s pecuniary interest in the new agitation for the using domestic manufacture, wherever such interests do not clash with public utility. He will work the harder if he see that his private interests are not to be compromised; and the people will thus be better served.

“I highly approve of Pierce Mahony’s Requisition (for a general meeting of Irish Reformers). It does not imply any dereliction of Repeal; and that I will *practically* prove. And it does not assert any such thing. Attend therefore at Westmoreland Street, and put my name and Maurice’s to that Requisition. Tell Mahony by a note, written when you receive this, that I approve of and sign his Requisition.

* * * * *

“I leave this, please God, on Saturday week, the 12th instant, for Bahoss; that is, to-morrow week. On the 14th, I intend to go to Killarney. * * I go to Cork on the 15th, and remain there agitating for the Provincial Meeting on the 16th. On the 17th, I go from Cork to Limerick, and on Friday, the 18th, to Dublin.

“Give Ray this list, that I may write to him about my letters and papers. Tell Maurice Prendergast that I can see him in Merrion Square on Saturday, the 19th, and that he can have the Charity Dinner any day in the ensuing fortnight, beginning with Monday, the 21st, which I think would be the best day for him. But give him the entire fortnight, to choose his own day.

* * * * *

“I have had *great* hunting—only one blank day. I have, since I saw you, killed seventy-seven hares. Yesterday the most splendid hunting I ever saw.

“Ever, my dearest, dearest John,

“Your fond, your —— Father,

“DANIEL O'CONNELL.

“See my letter of directions to Ray. Assist him; but let him alone be responsible. You must not share the responsibility. I do hate to be disappointed in my letters and papers.”

* * * * *

I have given the foregoing letters in their order of dates, without interposing any comment, that

the reader might form his own judgment upon them.

It will be seen how anxious, constant and tenderly affectionate was the endeavour to encourage the *novice* in agitation; overwhelming with praise every little thing that gave him satisfaction, and so delicately and tenderly touching on other points. I have the misfortune of possessing but a small comparative number of other letters from him,—a misfortune which I feel now; but for which I was in a manner *compensated beforehand* by its cause, namely, my being so constantly in his company or neighbourhood, that there was no occasion to write letters.

Of the other letters that I do possess, I shall have occasion to give some at a future stage of this work.

The “*Irish Manufacture*” movement that is spoken of in two of those which are given, commenced in the fall of the year 1840, and lasted some eight or nine months. It was, as its name indicated, a movement in favour of Irish manufactures, by promoting their consumption. Few objects more popular in Ireland, and more cried out against in England, could possibly be taken

up. In fact, the question of Irish manufactures has been, for more than a century and a half, one of the chief grounds of bitternesses and bickerings between the two countries.

“From the Revolution, till within these few years,” said Mr. Pitt, in the English House of Commons, A.D. 1785, when discussing the celebrated “commercial propositions” of that year, “the system had been that of debarring Ireland from the use of her own resources, and making her subservient to the interests (*so-called*) and opulence of the English people.”

“Ireland,” said the same high authority, nineteen years later, when discussing the first proposition of the Legislative Union, in 1799, “had long felt the narrow policy of Great Britain; who, influenced by views of trade and commercial advantage, and stained and perverted with selfish motives, had treated her with partiality and neglect, and never looked on her prosperity as that of the empire at large.”

“Till the year 1780,” said Mr. Huskisson, in 1825, in the Imperial Parliament, “the agriculture, internal industry, manufactures, commerce, and navigation of Ireland were all held in the

most rigid subserviency to the supposed interests of Great Britain.

“ In 1778 there was a proposal to allow Ireland to import sugar *direct*, and to export everything except woollens, (which manufacture had been greatly crippled and restricted by special statutes passed in King William the Third’s reign,) to pay for it; and this proposal was almost made *a question of allegiance* by the great towns of Great Britain; and so it was lost!

“ In 1779, a more limited concession was also lost!

“ But, towards the close of that year, the disasters in North America, and the state of things in Ireland, produced a *different feeling* in the British Parliament. State-necessities, acting under a sense of political danger, yielded without grace that which good sense and good feeling had before recommended in vain; and in the year 1782, under the like pressure, those concessions were rendered irrevocable.”

The foregoing testimonies, from unimpeachable and very unwilling authorities, will show the state of things from which sprung the frequent demonstrations, one of the latest of which is alluded to

in the letters of Mr. O'Connell in 1840. From Swift's time down to the year just mentioned, the Irish community have at various periods made efforts to counterbalance the injurious effect of legislative restrictions on their trade and commerce, by the operation of voluntary national agreements to give a preference to native manufacture over that imported.

Swift's maxim was pithy and to the point:—*“Burn everything that comes from England, save the coals!”*—even if seriously and literally adopted and acted upon, would not have involved a more monstrous absurdity, than the legislation which it was put forward to countervail.

Not the Dutch, nor even the English East India Company, in the wildest wantonness of their commercial jealousy and eagerness to secure unjust and pernicious monopolies, ever more flagrantly outraged right and reason, and the dictates of sound policy, than did the legislators of England in the restrictions, embarrassments, and cruel injuries which, at the suggestion of small interests and narrow trade prejudices in their own country, they inflicted upon the enterprise and commercial industry of Ireland.

The woollen manufacture of the latter was put down by special statute, passed openly and declaredly lest the woollen manufacture of the dominant country should be interfered with! It was not pretended at the time that the contemplated danger *had actually occurred*. On the contrary, the fact was well known, that up to that time no such interference or competition had occurred, or was likely soon to occur. But there was *the chance* that at some remote future time it might come about; and this *paulo post futurum* contingency was held as reason good and sufficient to justify an address from both Houses of Parliament to the King (William the Third), requesting him to “discourage the woollen manufacture in Ireland;” and his answer, that he would “do all that in him lay” for that end, as well as the statutory enactment by which Parliament and Monarch gave effect to their declarations.

Irish cotton manufactures were subjected to twenty-five per cent. duty on importation into England, and the *wearing of them in England* was forbidden under heavy penalties!

Direct trade with the colonies was utterly forbidden; and foreign trade practically so; as of the

articles that foreign countries would take from us, nearly all were forbidden to be exported save through England.

There was a similar severity and injustice as to our importations. We were obliged to receive nearly everything through and *from* England. Indeed, our importation of some articles—such, in particular, as *hops*—from any other country, was declared, in the Acts of Parliament prohibiting it, to be a “*public and common nuisance*.”

These few details will suffice to show what was the original force of the restrictions and trade-injustices against which the “Irish manufacture” agreements of the last century were directed. If, as has been before remarked, those agreements were practical absurdities, and total violations of sound principles, they were not more so than the legislative *monstrosities* which provoked them.

Their defeat was easy to be foreseen, and proceeded from very natural causes. Too many persons were interested, in Ireland itself, in the importation of English goods, to allow either of the universality of the agreement, or of good faith being always observed, even by those who did accept and loudest declaim about it. The most

strenuous and most general effort in this direction was made about sixty years ago, and was then defeated utterly and signally by some of the importing merchants, who, at the very first mention of the matter, took care to lay in much larger stocks than common of the threatened articles, and afterwards retailed them at their leisure, most probably under the denomination of *home-manufactures*.

Mr. O'Connell publicly warned the promoters of the last move of this kind—that which took place in 1840, the period to which his letters just given have reference—of the failure of all previous efforts, with the certainty of disastrous consequences; inasmuch as the temporary excitement created a demand, that, after calling labour into action to an unusual extent, speedily subsided again, leaving that labour unemployed, and thereby creating greater misery than before existed.

But, at the same time, he offered every assistance in his power, by preaching *and example*, to secure every possible chance of success and permanence to the effort; and he most fully carried out his offers.

It was whispered at the time, that not a few who were very prominent in the movement had valuable agencies from English manufacturers to receive and pass off English goods as Irish. To render this the easier, Irish marks were counterfeited in Manchester, Leeds, &c., on various articles sent in; and the trick was completely successful.

At one of the meetings then daily taking place in the otherwise unoccupied and deserted Royal Exchange of Dublin, Mr. Mooney, one of the foremost and most active propagators of this new form of nationality, lamented that the delf and earthenware manufactories of Ireland had so decayed, or perished, that their produce could not be substituted for English or Scotch made cups, saucers, plates, &c. &c.

“But,” cried he, with all the joy of a new discovery, “can we not for a time *use glass?* Our Irish glass-makers *were* the most skilful in the world. They are not all gone from us even yet. Let us call their skill and industry into requisition. Let every man who hears me instantly resolve to abandon the use of English or Scotch ware; and till we make a proper substitute at home, let us

, have glass cups, plates, dishes, pipkins, pans and all!!”

Upon this hint spake, not so much his willing *native* auditory (whatever might be the extent of their capabilities to carry out the advice,) as a worthy sharp-scented Englishman from Manchester, who happened to be in the crowd. He instantly wrote off the news to his principal in England, and followed his letter himself to press in person the idea that had arisen in his mind. This, which was literally carried out, was none other than the investment of some thousands of pounds in getting glass ware of all the before-mentioned descriptions cast and moulded, with, upon each article, the stirring legend:—

“ ERIN GO BRAGH.”

“ REPEAL.”

and

“ IRISH MANUFACTURE !”

It is a pity to have to add that so ingenious and ready a scheme should have failed. The Manchester bagman little knew that amongst the crowd who cheered Mr. Mooney’s uncompromising

proposition, there was but a small per-centage who knew the luxury of a tea-cup at all, or used any other *plate* for their scanty meal of potatoes than the few rough planks which did duty for tables in their wretched lodging-rooms.

A few of the operatives of various trades combined to establish "*marts*" of their own for the *exclusive* sale of Irish goods, distrusting the regular shopkeepers. But even into those marts, or in some of them at least, it was ascertained that English goods crept in, after a time, and the discovery of this fact gave a final blow to the movement.

It never could have had a chance of success unless the richer and higher classes had joined in it, and they, with few exceptions, held off. Many of them indeed over-acted the "*liberality*" which they professed as a reason for not joining, and seemed actually to give a marked preference to English and Scotch goods, for fear they should be accused of any partiality for the products of their own country, or any great anxiety for the employment and welfare of their poorer fellow-countrymen.

This over-acted "impartiality," coupled with a

calumnious candour in speaking or writing about their country, are two characteristics, as striking as they are unfortunately common and patent, of too many of the classes above the people in Ireland.

END OF VOL. I.

RECOLLECTIONS
AND EXPERIENCES

DURING A PARLIAMENTARY CAREER

FROM 1833 TO 1848.

BY

JOHN O'CONNELL, ESQ. M.P.

"Quæque ipse vidi
"Et quorum pars fui." VIRG.

"Exul . . .
"Projicit ampullas et sesquipedalia verba."
HOR.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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1849.

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PARLIAMENTARY

AND

AGITATION EXPERIENCES.



CHAPTER I.

OPEN-AIR AGITATION.—A BREAK DOWN.—A MONSTER MEETING.—
ANATHHEMA AGAINST REPEALERS.—PRETENDED COALITION.—LETTERS
OF MR. O'CONNELL.—THE "YOUNG IRELAND" PARTY.—MR. DAVIS.—
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—MR. KAVANAGH.

My first experiments in open-air agitation were not particularly encouraging. Upon both occasions, the platform, or hustings, fairly *broke down*. Upon the first of them, the platform, fortunately not at a great elevation from the ground, yielded in the centre; and the chairman, from having upon him, metaphorically, the whole weight of the meeting, was made to undergo something like an experience of it in hard physical reality.

Secretary, reporters, movers and seconders of resolutions, orators and all, we tumbled in upon him in doubtless "much admired" but not very agreeable confusion; and but for the lucky chance of a stout oaken table having covered him, the "pressure from without" would have put an end to him, as it has before now to ministries and parliaments.

On the second occasion we were a considerable height from the ground, and just before our fall we were assured that the platform "*would bear a house*,"—a form of expression very much in fashion on such occasions, but which I earnestly recommend to the particular *distrust* of all platform orators.

In both cases there had been persons underneath until a few moments before the accident. In the second case we had had exceeding trouble and difficulty to get them to remove, and the last had scarcely left the place, ere the crash occurred. A cross beam, made of green wood, snapped suddenly in two, and the superincumbent staging, with all its patriotic load, went down at once—

" Like some vast mountain,
Half sunk, with all its pines !"

It is by no means a pleasant sensation, that of thus *foundering on dry land*, particularly where the planking under your feet is loose, and separates in the fall. This was the case in the present instance, and as if the danger to our limbs was not great enough otherwise, a stout young bull-calf of a farmer set to leaping among the planks, with the kind intention of re-assuring the crowd outside as to *his* personal safety, and thus fractured a man's leg, besides minor damages resulting from his untimely activity.

In October, the first specimen of a "Monster-Meeting" took place. Mr. O'Connell came up from Darrynane for the purpose, and met our Dublin party at Kilkenny, where the assemblage was to be.

Upon an elevation in a large field, just outside of the town, a huge platform was constructed, having three stages diminishing in size until, at top of all, alone and unprotected, was the seat of the Chairman.

That position was reserved for me; and upon its very unenviable elevation I had to abide for four mortal hours the whole force of a smart westerly gale, sweeping with unobstructed fury

from Mount Leinster and the comrade hills, over miles of champaign country, until it came whistling and shrieking past my unfortunate head, making every tooth jar again, and almost realizing the “galley-yarn” aboard a man of war, of the hurricane in which it took six men to hold the captain’s hat on!

It was calculated on a bird’s-eye measurement from the high top of the platform, corrected by measuring the ground afterwards, that near 80,000 persons must have assembled. And nothing could have a finer effect than the scene which ensued at the dispersion of the meeting, when for miles on every side the roads, lanes, and by-paths through the meadows and tilled fields were tracked distinctly out in all their windings to the furthest stretch of the horizon, by the black lines of the departing crowds.

But a week previous to this assemblage, the present Lord Fortescue, then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, had taken occasion of an address from the old unreformed Corporation of Dublin, to fulminate an anathema against the Repealers; cutting them off from “place, power, and pension,” favour, emolument, or office, at the hands of the Government!

We lived and prospered notwithstanding, and at this very meeting got yeoman-service out of this topic. Indeed, His Excellency's denunciation rather helped the agitation, not only at Kilkenny, but in other parts of the country.

Still the accessions to the Repeal ranks during the winter of 1840-41 were by no means in proportion to what had hitherto been my father's experience when starting a new Association. The reason has been before noticed—the ingrained suspicion with which centuries of ill-treatment and treachery have so deeply marked the Irish character.

The kind of reasoning adopted practically, if not generally confessed, was something in this strain:—

“The Repeal Agitation was once suspended before;—*argal*, it may be suspended again!”

No account was taken of the circumstances (already detailed) under which the suspension occurred; no account, or little account of the proclaimed resolution that the Repeal Standard was now finally hoisted, never again to be struck till “the Standard of Ireland should wave over her own native Parliament re-assembled in

College Green!" The *refrain* still was the same from a large portion of the Liberals of Ireland:—

"The Agitation was once suspended before; it may be suspended again. *Therefore* we won't join it."

Mr. O'Connell's answer to this was simply:—

"If you distrust *me*, that is the very reason why you should join the agitation, and so *compel* me to go on and be steady in labouring for the Repeal. The more you hold off, the more danger will there be that the agitation will again have to be suspended, through want of adequate support."

Another difficulty of quite an opposite character also came in the way of a rapid augmentation of numbers in the new body.

This was the over-eager, headlong, *terribly uncompromising* men, who wanted the Association, while yet in its weak and struggling infancy, to be committed to the strongest measures with regard to those who held off from it: measures which it required all the excitement and enthusiasm of 1843 to justify in the eyes of the country, when afterwards adopted.

According to these counsellors, an instant denunciation should be made—without giving the

slightest *law*, or opportunity of grace, and while, as before remarked, the Association itself could scarcely be said to be in existence—of all parties occupying or seeking to occupy posts of public importance in the gift of the people, (as Members of Parliament, Poor Law Guardians, candidates for corporate honours under the “Municipal Corporations Bill,” which had just then passed into law,) who did not at once enrol themselves on our books.

Dublin City and Dublin County, to keeping up the Parliamentary Registration in which, the popular attention had been for some time devoted, and money applied from the growing funds of the Association, ought, according to these gentlemen, to be utterly abandoned, without a struggle, to the Conservative party; because the Liberal members or candidates for the representation of these important localities did not at once declare for Repeal, before even the people of Ireland, in sufficient number to attest their general will, had as yet done so.

Of course the same inexorable rule was to be applied to any remoter localities assisted by the Association, that was recommended for the Metropolitan.

It was to such premature and unreasoning rigidness as this that the passages have reference in Mr. O'Connell's letters already cited, where he commissioned me to communicate his opinions to the Committee of the Association, on electioneering matters.

The "*Croker's Hill*" meeting at Kilkenny (as it was, not very felicitously nor appropriately, designated from the locality where it was held) was not by any means the only *monster-precursor* of the real monster-meetings of 1843.

At four or five other places, in the interval between the summer of 1840 and the opening of the parliamentary session of 1841, there were also large Repeal meetings—not less than from 25,000 to 30,000 people at any one of them. Indeed, they were then considered so large as to attract attention and remark at a very early period of the session.

At any moment of the brief duration of the latter, Lord Stanley could have carried his bill for the further restriction of Irish parliamentary franchises, had he so chosen. But, notwithstanding his declarations when bringing forward the same measure in former years, that the necessity for it

was most urgent and imminent, and that all who opposed any difficulties in its way ought to consider themselves responsible for the repetition and continuation of what he declared to be crying evils and iniquities in the existing system, he no sooner had the power (by reason of the gradual *ebbing out* of the Liberal majority, and *stranding* of the Ministerial bark) to push effectively, and procure the enactment as law of this great remedy so recommended by him, than all at once his ardour slackened; and neither then, nor during the two or three subsequent years that he held office under Sir Robert Peel, did he take one step towards what had so long been with him a prime object.

In fact, Ireland, that had been so long made use of as a pretext for assaulting the Liberal Ministry of the day, was, in this, the final session of that Ministry's term of office, allowed to drop nearly altogether out of sight and thought. The object was accomplished. The unpopularity in England of the Liberal Ministry was brought about and established. The calumnious cry of a coalition and disgraceful barter between the Whigs and the leading Irish representatives (that cry which was

made such base use of a few years later in Ireland, and with equal absence of foundation in fact,) had done its work, and the final battle could now be given on purely *English* ground. Accordingly the Chancellor of the Exchequer's budget for the year, with its attendant infinitesimal doses of *Corn-Law and Commercial Reform*, was selected as the occasion for giving the *coup-de-grace*; the "Irish hobby-horses" (as Poulett Thompson afterwards denominated them) of the Whig Ministry, being allowed to sink quietly out of notice and of thought.

Early in the month of May in that year, (1841,) I was despatched by my father to arrange some matters in Ireland connected with the approaching general elections. The following were among the letters that he wrote to me from London, while I was engaged upon this mission.

" *London, May 21, 1841.*

" MY DEAREST JOHN,

* * * *

" * * I think I *must* go to Dublin next week, but in the meantime act for me, and act as if I was *not* to go over—cautiously, but *firmly*.

* * * * *

“First,—as to Dublin city:—

“Is it *possible* to get a second Repeal candidate for that city? I fear not. I went over with some friends here the likely names, but found nobody whom we could hope to prevail on to stand. Consult Ray and the Committee. Ask —— his advice confidentially. You will gain him so,—or at least disarm him.

“Next, submit whether in the last resort it would not be better have Mr. Hutton again, if we cannot procure a second declared and desirable *Repealer*.

“Inquire in the most particular and most confidential way on this subject.

“Secondly,—Dublin city again:—

“Find out from Ray what approach he has made to ascertain the constituency of Dublin city. Let me have a distinct answer. I do not care to the value of a pint of ditch-water for the reasons which prevent the precise constituency from being ascertained. All that I want is, *the fact*, the *one way*, or *the other*.

“Kilkenny city:—

“I have written to Edmond Smithwick, telling

him confidentially that you would address the electors of Kilkenny the moment that you were honourably disengaged from Athlone. You probably will hear from him. Do whatever he tells you it is right for you to do.

“Athlone town:—

“As soon as you possibly can, after you receive this letter, see my friend O’Beirne, and tell him how you are situated as to Kilkenny; but that you will arrange everything so as to aid the Liberal candidate for Athlone; that I should prefer him to any other whomsoever—a preference he certainly deserves for his disinterested attachment to us in reference to that town; that you and I will give him every assistance in our power; that there are other candidates spoken of, namely, Mr. —, (to whom I must in a day or two write,) and who, if he stand, and that O’Beirne refuses, (I should have the *refusal first*,) will gladly employ — as his agent.

“But, above all things, see whether O’Beirne will not at once *accept the candidateship*. Urge him to it, and let him go down at once and pre-occupy the voters. This may be of vital importance. *Not a minute should be lost*. The

Tories will spend money in handfuls, and they should be forestalled in canvassing, while yet there is no corruption in the market.

“If O’Beirne will not stand, I think he and you should take post-horses and go down to ——; his father is dying, and he may wish to be in Parliament. Do you and O’Beirne put him in the right way, and give him all the aid in your power.

“If neither O’Beirne nor —— will stand, there is, I believe, a candidate ready; but one whom I should postpone to any faithful Irishman.

“Do not read nor show this letter to the Committee, nor to anybody save to *Ray*, in whom I place unlimited confidence. Let, however, nothing prevent you from seeing O’Beirne at once.

* * * * *

“I enclose *you* a note I got from ——. I am sure that —— *will* not, and he *must* not, under existing circumstances, create a row in ——. I will, if it be necessary, go down myself to counteract him if he do, and to canvass for ——.

“Ever your tenderly affectionate Father,

“DANIEL O’CONNELL.

“John O’Connell, M.P.”

“*London, 26 May, 1841.*”

“MY DEAREST JOHN,

“There are no news of consequence. The result of the debate on Peel’s motion to-morrow is not as yet even guessed at.

“It is thought that Lord Worsley, (present Earl of Yarborough,) and other *corn-law* men, who voted against us on the last motion, will vote with us upon this. The debate will, I suppose, last several days.

“If the Ministers are beaten, it will hurry the dissolution of Parliament; that, however, is the only effect that it will have.

“I have written to Kilkenny an answer to some resolutions that have been passed and published there. I concluded my letter with proposing you for their choice. You will, I make no doubt, hear the result from the Secretary. I take it almost for granted that you will be returned.

* * * * *

“*28th May.*—I am so *torn to pieces*, that I could not finish my letter to you yesterday, or the day before.

“The time is come when the City of Dublin must ascertain who is to be the second candidate

at the approaching election. Is it not cruel at such a moment to distract our attention by ——'s personalities and bye-battles! I am exceedingly displeased at his conduct, and am convinced that he must at any risk be stopped in his reckless career. Steele, as usual, behaved admirably in the chair. And I must say I am delighted with your conduct, and your —— speech, or rather speeches. My beloved John, you do give me — — — — —. You were, from the necessity of your position, obliged to treat —— with too much consideration. But he must not meddle any more with —— or ——.

“It is not serving the country to make wrangles or quarrels. *What is desirable to be done can never be accomplished even by a Repeal triumph over dissentients from Repeal in this or that locality.* We want to convince, not to insult; and it would be better to do nothing than to excite a strong opposition.

* * * * *

“Speak to him calmly *but firmly.* And beg of him, in my name, to give us his best energies in the struggle to save Dublin; to help us to seek out a second Repealer; and if *he* cannot, and *we*

cannot get one—then to get us as good a substitute as possible.

“ I enclose Hutton’s letter to me. I am at liberty to have it published. Read it therefore at the Association Meeting on Monday ; but prepare the speakers to treat him—Hutton—with the consideration that he deserves on every account, public and private. Impress upon them that he has a considerable following, especially of Dissenters. Our cause needs the support of every class; and we should show them that we value their aid, as well as that of other Protestants. Nothing, therefore, should be said to give just cause for irritation. Get a veil of oblivion thrown over such parts of his public conduct as have displeased the people. * * * *

“ Of all men living not pledged to Repeal, I would desire to see George Roe in Parliament, if he could be got to stand. But that I fear is hopeless.

“ If John Ennis will declare himself a Repealer, he would be a good man.

“ I wish you to go as soon as possible to ———, and set him quite right as to my opinions respecting Lord Kildare.

“Indeed, I wish you to know my exact thoughts on this as on other points. As far as I am personally concerned, I should *wish* to have him as a colleague. It is unnecessary to say, however, that he should be as explicit as possible in political opinion. On the whole he would make an excellent Government candidate; and I repeat, that as far as I am personally concerned, I would be very glad of his coming forward.

“I really have a veneration for his family, notwithstanding the apathy of the present duke.

“But you must distinctly warn ——, that *I* am not to decide for the popular party in Dublin. They *must* be consulted. I would readily do all I could in favour of Lord Kildare; but I cannot pledge myself for the party which supports me. They certainly would prefer to try the battle with *an out-and-out Repealer*.

“But if they cannot get such, I should hope, and indeed I do believe, they would support the young marquess.

“It will be very difficult to fight Carlow. There must be a protection fund provided, otherwise the destruction of the unfortunate tenantry after the election will be terrible. If they can get no other

candidate to stand along with Ashton Yates, I suppose I must give them your brother Daniel; though it will be very hard on me to have to bear the expense of so many elections. I will of course go down to Carlow at once when wanted, and go from parish to parish *agitating*.

“ I will write off for Dan at once, (my brother was at Florence at the time,) and meanwhile hold myself in readiness to go down at call and work for him. But those who are urging me to this trouble, risk, and expense, must recollect that protection for the tenantry by some species of an indemnity fund will be absolutely necessary, as there will assuredly be plenty of evictions after the struggle.

“ My accounts from Carlow say that under the circumstances I mention, we should succeed—viz. ultimate protection for the tenantry,—immediate and extensive agitation,—and a son of mine.

“ I entirely approve of what you have done in the matter of the elections.

“ Great uncertainty prevails as to what is to be the ministerial fate on Peel’s motion. The majority either way will be very small. Our friends expect to have it. The public mind seems

coming round. There never was such a change in their favour as on the free-trade question.

“ I will write two letters to-morrow. One to be read at the Association; the other for your discretion.

“ Ever, darling John,

“ Your tenderly fond Father,

“ DANIEL O'CONNELL.”

“ *London, May 29, 1841.*

“ MY DEAREST JOHN,

“ I send to Ray a long letter for the Association. But I want you not to read to that body, or to print, Hutton's letter. He would be too far committed if that letter were published, and we should leave him a *locus pœnitentiæ* after he sees my letter to the Repealers. I have, you see, changed my mind since I wrote my last letter.

“ See —, and communicate to him all I write to you.

* * * * *

“ Announce at the Association as a fact I assured you of, that Ashton Yates stands again

for Carlow county with my son Dan. Announce this after my letter is read, so as not to spoil the effect of that letter. My great object is to make Carlow the Clare of the Repeal—urge *this point*.

“ I will send my address for Dan by the train as a parcel to-morrow, or next day by post.

“ Tell Davis, with my regards, that he is not aware of the great delicacy there is in managing ——; principally because jealousies amongst themselves are easily excited. Tell him the want of funds is a decisive reason for not urging the Repeal as we otherwise would. This is really the secret of our weakness. I will press the appointment of Repeal wardens until every parish is provided with that machinery.

“ There never was the least idea of —— standing for Dublin. He and I would be awkward colleagues.

“ Tell ——, I believe that all parties at Athlone are favourable to O’Beirne. I wrote to all I could on his behalf. * * *

“ Yours, my beloved John,

“ Most tenderly,

“ DANIEL O’CONNELL.

“ John O’Connell, Esq.

"Announce, also, that *Gisborne* stands for Carlow town. At least, so I have been assured.

"Take equal care that Mr. Hutton's letter does not get into print.

"Tell ———, that I believe Hutton made his peace with the grocers. They *are a most valuable class of men*, and deserve his attention."

The "Davis" mentioned in the fifth paragraph of the foregoing, was the talented and ardent founder of that section of the Repealers which came to be known much later as the "Young Ireland" party.

He was a man, it is needless to say, of great literary talent, and of a highly informed and cultivated mind, with extraordinary powers of retaining and *utilizing* whatever he had once acquired, and a constant thirst for new intellectual acquisitions. Had his judgment been as matured as were his literary tastes, and above all, if a few years more had been allowed for the process in which his mind was so evidently and so admirably engaged, of self-purification from prejudices imbibed as it were with his mother's milk, and fostered and strengthened by the sectarian

influences to which he was subjected by the accidents of birth and position, there can be no doubt that he would have acted a prominent part upon the political stage. As it was, he created a new party, and one which, if he had lived to influence its counsels, might have escaped the shoals upon which it has made shipwreck since his death.

In 1841, he had not as yet come actively forward in politics, but was evidently preparing himself so to do. I believe indeed that he was even then connected with a newspaper advocating Repeal politics, the Dublin Weekly Register, as at least an occasional contributor.

The part which Mr. O'Connell was under, in fact, a moral necessity of taking at the general elections of the year 1841, like that which was expected from him at all the elections during the last seventeen years of his life, was not a very easy nor a very limited one.

He was consulted on *every thing*, by *every body*, from *everywhere*. He had to cheer up and stimulate, to caution and to check; to mediate between contending sections of the popular party; to allay jealousies, smooth down irritations, suggest or express opinions upon candidates, write a multi-

tude of public addresses, and *lose no time* in attending to each and every one of these particulars, lest offended vanity should make the neglected party abandon exertion, or throw himself into the hands of the anti-popular party.

The interests of a man's own locality, like those of his own self, always appear to him to be of paramount importance; and Mr. O'Connell had to deal with each case thus referred to him for counsel, opinion, and assistance, as if it were *the* most important of all, and had caught and engrossed his whole attention.

In addition, he had to arrange for his own election and that of his sons, and, of course, provide what funds were required. Nor did his pecuniary efforts end here; for wherever there was a difficult election, he was looked to as a species of national treasurer, and answered the call to the best of his power.

There never was any species of public contribution of which so much returned into the hands of the public, as of the "*Tribute*" or "O'Connell Rent," as was indifferently called the magnificent annual collection made by the people of Ireland to enable my father to fight their battles in

Parliament. Even in ordinary years, large amounts went back in subscriptions of all kinds, religious and political; but in years of general elections considerably more than one-half was disbursed in the expenses of the elections and election petitions of which he undertook the burthen.

The Carlow election, to which reference is made in Mr. O'Connell's letters, was one of the fiercest contested in Ireland. Carlow is a small county, with—what is unusual in Ireland—a resident proprietary big and little; and all Tory, or very nearly so. The unscrupulous use of intimidation, petty persecution, and bribery by the squires great and small, who were always at hand and ready to assist each other in their malpractices, had completely broken the spirit of the middle classes, and seriously depressed that of the people.

It was, therefore, a task far beyond the ordinary business of agitation to “create a soul beneath the ribs of this death” of all public feeling and patriotic exertion.

The following extract of a letter from my father when actually on the spot, will give some

idea of the difficulties in the way. The letter in question first refers to the attempt to get a candidate for Dublin.

“ Carlow, June 18, 1841. ”

“ * * *

“ It is a bitter disappointment not to have Lord Kildare stand; but as we must quietly resign ourselves to get no work out of that family, let not one angry word be spoken, nor one single reflection on the duke’s conduct. He is sadly faint-hearted, but there is no use in his being told so.

“ We have glorious prospects here, if we could but work them out. The people are rousing, and the Catholic clergy are, for the first time for years, taking their station. One barony, that in which the Kavanagh property is situate, was remarkable for the indisposition of the clergy to agitation. Well, we have got them ALL in active motion. If the Whig candidate got the help from the Whigs which he ought, and which they can give, we should succeed gloriously.

“ With respect to our own affairs, the prospect is of course clouded by the refusal of the duke

to allow his son to stand. I do not believe the deputation will have any weight whatsoever with him. I have known him visited by several deputations to beg of him to take part in several proceedings. I never knew any deputation to succeed. He never yields: so much the worse for us. I see the parishes are meeting right well."

Four of us went down from Dublin to "open trenches" for this purpose, some four weeks previous to the election, and to prepare the way for my father.

Our party were, poor Tom Steele, Arthur Ffrench, late Secretary to the late Reform and Precursor Associations, Thomas Reynolds, now Marshal of the City of Dublin, and myself.

Of these, the two first are in their quiet graves. Of my beloved friend Tom Steele, I have spoken in a previous chapter. Arthur Ffrench was a man far less known in political life, not having engaged in it till about two years before; but he had already commanded respect by his activity, sincerity and efficiency. He acted as agent to the Repeal candidates. Mr. Reynolds, as already

stated, is now an active, ever busy, and most efficient officer of the municipality of Dublin.

We had forty long Irish miles (nearly forty-eight of the English measurement) of a hilly and dusty road, in an open carriage, with a hot summer sun above, and tremendous clouds of dust below, to endure ere we reached our destination. Here we had no sooner arrived than an enormous crowd collected, and we were compelled, without a moment's respite, to "go into action," and give them a specimen of our astonishing eloquence. One of the windows of the drawing-room of the hotel where we had entered was removed bodily, and we presented our blowzed and dusted faces and persons to the delighted gaze of the patriotic inhabitants of Carlow.

Mr. Reynolds was the first to address them, and in the course of his harangue enlarged much upon the admirable "temperance movement," (then in the hey-day of its progress and prosperity,) of the precepts and practice of which he was (and is) a most rigid observer. But the effects of our seven or eight hours' *boiling and baking* on the road had been to enflame his visage most *suspiciously*; and it was whispered among us that a fellow in the

crowd, who was not quite such a passionate admirer of Father Mathew, was heard to remark,

“Faith, that gentleman spakes very finely of temperance, to be sure; but just look at his face; sure, if he doesn’t drink, he *ought to take down the sign!*”

After this, it required double courage in the rest of our party (none of whom were qualified, as Mr. Reynolds was, to exhort to total abstinence) to present our portentous visages to the censorious multitude.

On the following day, Sunday, after having heard mass, &c., we started in a hired carriage-and-four to Tallow, a small village about twelve miles from Carlow, known to be the rendezvous, on Sundays, of a great number of freeholders. After the last mass there, the freeholders and people assembled, and for three long hours did we discourse “most excellent music” to them, stimulating and cheering them up to the approaching fight. We left the place amid several hearty cheers, and returned in high spirits and hope to our head-quarters at Carlow; when all our exultation was damped and destroyed, by being informed by one or two of the local leaders, that they con-

sidered enough had been done that day for a week or a fortnight, and that our best course would be to take post-horses next morning and return to Dublin!

Tom Steele looked at me—I looked at Tom Steele—Reynolds and French exchanged glances of dismayed astonishment;—and for a while we had not a word to say! Here we had been brought down, away from our various occupations in Dublin, expressly for the purpose of agitating, and of agitating actively, in the short interval to elapse ere the election should commence. We had made a first step with apparent success,—advanced well “into the bowels of the land,”—and were we now to strike our tents, and *déloger sans trompette*?

At length I mustered courage to say, that we had not come down upon our own motion,—that we had been specially solicited,—that it was for no personal pleasure or advantage we had come, but at great personal inconvenience and trouble, to discharge what we believed a duty, and serve the good cause as far as in us might lie;—that what we had seen that day gave us hope that the people could be roused, even from the depths of

the slavish depression into which the active, incessant, and grinding petty tyranny of their local oppressors, constantly resident and constantly combined against them, had plunged so large a portion of the farmer and labouring classes;—that we really should not know what account to give in Dublin of a mission so abruptly and ridiculously terminated;—and, finally, that until better reason should be given than any as yet mentioned for our *running away*, we would not only stand our ground, but push the agitation to the utmost extent of our opportunities and powers.

This declaration set matters at rest for the moment; but next morning, while in deep consultation with a large number of gentlemen connected with the town and neighbourhood, an excellent clergyman, known to be an Anti-Repealer, suddenly came in; and, scarcely waiting for the ordinary introductions, assailed me, and my father through me, for presuming to agitate, and to introduce the name of my brother.

To this new, *pleasant* allocution I quietly replied by *showing my credentials*, and informing him of the manner in which my father, after making every effort in his power to procure some one else,

had at length been compelled to consent to my brother's nomination, rather than even one of the Conservative candidates should have a walk over the course.

My respected assailant waxed even warmer, and was proceeding to lecture extensively on politics in general, when I made appeal to the gentlemen in the room—told them I was quite ready, on the instant, to withdraw my brother's name—and certainly should do so, if they did not confirm what I had said, &c. &c.

On this, there was a general *insurrection* against the worthy clergyman, my post-horses were countermanded, and we all sat down to dinner together, and became excellent friends.

A week afterwards I had to go to Kilkenny on the business of my own election ; and while there some 120 or 130 *Carlow freeholders* were sent in to our especial care. It appeared that the landlord-practice at the Carlow elections had been, to “sweep the country side” of the voters several days before the election, and lodge and keep them comfortably under watch and ward within the demesne walls of one or other of the candidates, and so secure them from being operated upon by agitation.

Refusal to submit to this species of *abduction* was considered as high and grave an offence as refusal to vote according to the landlord's wish, and punished accordingly.

The popular party at the election of 1841 retaliated this practice on the landlords. For three whole weeks we had, as I have said, 120 or 130 voters of the neighbouring county snugly quartered in an old brewery in the city of Kilkenny, fed most abundantly, entertained during the day with the music of the temperance bands of the city, and during the evening with political speechification,—a strong and active watch of true Kilkenny boys being meantime maintained within and without, day and night, to prevent desertions and invasions.

The feats of *swallowing* which some of these poor fellows accomplished during the two or three first days, while they were quite new to good feeding, and our commissariat was not sufficiently regulated, were wonderful. One poor fellow, over six feet in height, and nearly five in the breadth of the shoulders—a bony, gaunt, lank-looking creature—made the following morning meal, greatly to the dismay of the caterer and contractor:—

Two plates of cold corn-beef;
Two ditto of mutton;
Bread, butter, and cheese, *to no end*;
Two bowls of coffee;
Three large bowls of tea;
A bottle of soda-water; (how got, history
sayeth not, nor yet how it was *relished*;)
And, finally,
A glass of whiskey! (This item was “*contraband*.”)

On the day of “nomination” at Carlow, we set out from Kilkenny, with our “caged birds,” to traverse the twenty-two Irish miles intervening between us and the scene of action.

First came a stage-coach, loaded with the “agitators”—Carlow and Kilkenny men intermixed; then one of Bianconi’s long stage-cars, with a temperance-band to enliven us on the road; then twenty jaunting-cars, with the voters, and a *guard* car bringing up the rear. On either side we had an escort of County Kilkenny farmers, on their stout hacks, to guard our convoy from any *guerilla* charges that the enemy might take it into their heads to make.

Within five miles of Carlow we received a

message from my father, that he did not wish *any sticks* to be brought into the town, for fear of any disturbance that might give the enemy an advantage. Those who know how *inseparable* the Irish peasant ordinarily is from his beloved stick, will estimate the difficulty that we at first anticipated to induce obedience to the intimation just received. But out of the hundreds that by this time had gathered around us, not one refused to comply, when the reason was stated; and they chose a novel, and to some of us rather an inconvenient way of disarming themselves—that of flinging the sticks high into the air, giving or *intending* to give them a direction that would cause them to fall into the fields at either side.

The *intention* not being always quite carried out, such of us as were on the elevated front box and roof of the stage-coach had several very narrow escapes for our heads; and much as I admired the realization of the old descriptions of “the air being darkened with missile weapons,” I was by no means sorry when the hurtling storm was over, and we were at liberty to proceed, with our heads as unbroken as there was now a guarantee that the peace would be.

The tactics of our opponents were to affect as much alarm as possible ; and accordingly we found a strong military force to greet us at the entrance of the town. But our very peaceful demeanour procured us entrance, and at last we had our convoy safely lodged in a long hay-store attached to the hotel ; where, during the succeeding night, they had a very narrow escape of being all burned to death, owing to the criminal carelessness of a man who had undertaken the duty of watching at the head of the ladder that led up to their abode, and who fell asleep, dropping his lanthorn among the hay.

We had, during the five polling days that ensued, several flagrant specimens of the “fantastic tricks” that partisans “decked in a little brief authority” can play with impunity. The sheriff, sub-sheriff, and magistrates who chose to act, were all of *the other side*. They secured for their own party all the convenient rooms and other accommodations of the Court-house ; leaving us nothing but what they could not possibly deny, and what was open to every interruption. They availed themselves of every rumour to shut gates and doors, and march soldiers and police in the

way of our voters as we sought to bring them up; and when we had surmounted the difficulties and escaped the perils *outside*, we were set upon from ambuscades in the winding passages inside, and the wretched trembling voters sought to be wrested from us, and conducted to the tally rooms of the Conservatives, where agents and rent-bailiffs were in waiting to scare the poor creatures out of all idea of independence.

Notwithstanding all this, we were doing well, when on the third or fourth day the gates to the Court-house were all closed of a sudden; and when we remonstrated on the outrageous injustice of thus interrupting us, we were informed that a report had just come in that a large force of armed peasantry were marching *from the Dublin side* upon the town! Cavalry, infantry, police, and *artillery with lighted matches* proceeded out to meet the foe, and after nearly two hours' absence returned with two men, three women, and a boy, whom they had met on the road.

Meantime we had applied to the sheriff for the keys, to get admission to the Court-house. The sheriff referred us to his deputy: the deputy referred us back to him; and when we went, we

could not find the principal. Having at length hunted him out, we were again referred by him to the sub-sheriff, who in turn was missing; and thus for nearly three hours was the polling stopped, to the great discouragement of the trembling serfs of the landlords whom we had in our tally rooms, and to the great advantage of the other party.

Finally, we were defeated by a majority of seven: those seven being actually men who deserted from us in one of the polling booths, frightened by the shouts, execrations, and threats, with which their old masters and their allies overwhelmed them, when going up to vote.

An Englishman would naturally ask, Was there no help for all this—at least, no remedy afterwards? There was none; the Whig government were too much occupied with *packing their trunks*, preparing to leave office; and the new Tory government would have realized to us the old adage of what befell the unfortunate gentleman who thought to go to law with the monarch of the nether regions; the court being held *below*. Money we had none for the expenses of an election petition; and if we had, the Parliament of 1841 was not likely to have furnished a very impartial tribunal.

An indemnity fund of several thousand pounds was however collected in subscriptions; one gentleman, the late Major Bryan, of the county of Kilkenny, giving, with a munificence for which he was distinguished upon all public and especially on charitable occasions, no less a sum than 500*l*. Many poor fellows who suffered for their honest votes were relieved; and if a little more judgment had been exercised, scarce one would have ultimately suffered. But to save *one farmer* alone, over whom an enormous arrear of rent was hanging, more than a thousand pounds were most injudiciously spent; and the collections which my father had succeeded in causing to be set on foot in other parts of Ireland to come in aid of the Carlow men, were checked and finally stopped by the unfortunate resolution adopted by the local agitators of that county, not to let the result of their own efforts for the same purpose be generally known.

I have been thus minute in describing the occurrences of this election, because they afford a striking proof how utterly misplaced the charge of intimidation, so frequently brought against the popular party in Ireland, would often be found if the facts of each case were known. There *was*

intimidation certainly, and gross and flagrant intimidation; but it was exercised *against the people*: and there *was* persecution; but the poor creatures who voted for their country were its victims, and not those who submissively bowed to the arbitrary will of the local squires.

The Conservative party had succeeded in the election contest of the preceding year, by a majority of upwards of 150. In the interval, circumstances had occurred to strengthen them still more; new registries of *sure* voters having been made, and the tenure of what they called *rebellious*, that is to say, conscientious voters, having expired. And yet, we not only beat down their majority, but would have gained the victory only for the chance defection of a few men at the last moment.

Mr. Kavanagh, one of the Conservative candidates at this election, had a strong hold upon the *clannish* affections of the people. He was reputed (I believe with justice) to be a lineal descendant of the O'Kavanaghs, Milesian princes of Leinster; and his large property included a good deal that his family had held in fee from time immemorial.

Throughout the penal laws the family had

remained Catholic, preserving their property by virtue of the antiquity of the title ; that iniquitous code not having had a retrospective operation. At length, when the storm was some time blown over, and the sun beginning to shine out once more upon the Catholics, (they having not only been freed from some of the more cruel restraints and penalties, but also admitted to a portion of their political rights,) the then head of the family, frightened by the passing cloud of the occurrences of 1798, abandoned the faith of his forefathers, and became a Protestant.

This circumstance weakened, but could not entirely counteract the old traditionary devotion to the family, that made the canvassing of his tenantry at the election of 1841 one of our greatest difficulties and impediments.

CHAPTER II.

LETTERS OF MR. O'CONNELL TO HIS FRIENDS, REFERRING TO VARIOUS PERIODS OF HIS POLITICAL CAREER.—MR. HENRY GRATTAN.—ANTI-PATHY SHOWN BY GEORGE THE FOURTH TOWARDS MR. O'CONNELL.—FURTHER EXTRACTS FROM MR. O'CONNELL'S CORRESPONDENCE.

IN these loose, disjointed memoranda of political matters in and out of Parliament, it will not be considered out of place to give other letters of Mr. O'Connell, besides those which he happened to address to myself, and relating to other and interesting periods of his protracted and arduous political career.

The following, then, have reference to the great event of the year 1829, the carrying of the Catholic Relief, or, as it was generally denominated in Ireland, the Catholic Emancipation Bill, as also to the circumstances of his own rejection by vote of the House of Commons, when, first elected for

Clare, and seeking to take his seat for that county in the year just named.

Many of these letters were addressed to James Sugrue, Esq., a relative of Mr. O'Connell's, and one of the kindest, truest, most devoted friends that man ever had. In addition to his personal kindness and devotion towards my father—whose private affairs he may be said to have managed, as it were, during upwards of fourteen busy years, gratuitously, and at exceeding trouble to himself, James Sugrue had been also singularly useful and efficient in working the details of the Catholic agitation in the Committees at the Corn Exchange. This respected gentleman is several years dead.

The other letters were addressed to the late Edward Dwyer, Esq., the very able and truly estimable Secretary of the Catholic Association.

Of his merits it can scarcely be necessary to speak, to those who have taken any interest in Irish affairs during the "Emancipation" struggle. He rendered the most important, and indeed, invaluable service to the Catholic body, and to the cause: services such as could not be surpassed. Mr. O'Connell ever held him in the very highest estimation, and frequently declared that he con-

sidered it a most happy circumstance for the popular cause, to have had such a man in the difficult, laborious, and most responsible office of Secretary; and that but for Edward Dwyer, he could not have carried on the Association.

Mr. Dwyer is also dead several years. Indeed, looking back to the comparatively brief and recent space of time within which the Catholic Association rose, flourished, conquered, and passed away, it is startling to think how many of those whom we recollect to have seen (and heard) among the most prominent of its members, have themselves passed away, and left their places vacant.

The Reverend Francis J. L'Estrange, the excellent, pure-hearted, single-minded, and truly patriotic Friar of Clarendon Street Chapel, the first, or nearly the first, who set the good example to the second order of clergy, of discharging their duty as fearlessly and openly as *citizens*, as they always had done as clergymen,—his respected (and, to every member of Mr. O'Connell's family, *beloved*) name is the first that suggests itself upon the sad list of faithful servants whom poor Ireland has lost.

John Bric, the faithful and the true—a man of

singular promise of utility and *practical work* in the cause of Ireland, one who had already done much in her service during the few years that he was spared to work in it, and who would have assuredly achieved high and honourable distinction in his profession, (that of the law,) had he lived after emancipation had opened to Catholics the legitimate rewards of skill and ability, comes next to memory. Between him and Mr. O'Connell there was the warmest and fastest friendship throughout his short career.

Martin Lanigan, John Redmond, the eccentric, wayward, but not ungifted Lawless, Sugrue, Edward Dwyer, Steele, and other honoured names, crowd upon the mind. It is sad indeed to think that Ireland has lost such men—such tried, able, and devoted servants; and in this present hour of her deepest misery, the thought of what they might have effected for her relief is a new and an increased affliction.

Of him whom these true patriots so readily and cheerfully recognised and followed as their political leader, it is not for the writer of these pages to speak in eulogy. His deeds are before the world; and it is for posterity to pronounce

upon them, when the heats, jealousies, passions, and prejudices of the present time shall have passed away.

The following is the first in date of the letters referred to at the commencement of this chapter.

(PRIVATE.)

“ 19, *Bury Street, St. James's,*
March 2, 1829.

“ MY DEAR FRIEND,

“ I have had three *appeals* to me on the subject of the Finance Committee. How ignorant they are who imagine that I have any control over your measures beyond what poor influence the advice of an individual may have!

“ The three claimants are—first, the Model School—second, Staunton—and, third, Rev. Mr. Brady. On their claims I respectfully offer my advice—submitting of course the decision to the wisdom of the Committee. There were, I believe, 1,500% voted to the Model School, of which, I believe, they did not get above 500%. If I be right in this, it would appear to me that any claim within the 1,500% ought to be attended to: so far, indeed, it would be my opinion that the body

is pledged; farther than that it would seem to me that we ought not to go.

“As to the second, Staunton’s claim, it really strikes me to be a very strong one; he never would have been prosecuted but that he was the organ of the Catholic body, and he was prosecuted by the very worst enemies of the Catholics: he is therefore strong at both sides. The counsel in that cause took no fees. The bill due to Mr. Scott must be comparatively light; and suffer me to add, that there is not one single agent amongst the entire number of the attorneys who have so nobly sustained the Catholic cause in Ireland—there is not one who in my judgment deserves more attention and respect than the honest, intelligent, disinterested, and spirited Scott.

“Pray speak to the Committee to give Mr. Scott’s and Staunton’s claim the most favourable consideration. Let them recollect what a present Mr. Scott made of his services at the Ennis election. The sum he then forgave would cover this demand of Staunton.

The third was the claim of the Rev. Mr. Brady. Everybody knows that his was purely an Orange persecution. I beg to recommend him strongly to

the consideration of the Committee. I have only to add, that if the Committee differ with me on these or any of these points, they owe me no kind of excuse or apology—not the least; each individual has as good a right to exercise his judgment on these topics as I have, and to decide accordingly.

“The Association Bill has not as yet received the Royal Assent. You can go on receiving money for *ten days after the Bill passes*;—you can transact all business respecting the expenditures as long after the Bill becomes a law as you choose. The Bill prohibits two things: it abolishes the *name* of the Catholic Association; it prohibits the receipt of *rent* for any public body. It leaves every assembly a legal one until the Lord Lieutenant may choose to proclaim it otherwise; so that there must be a previous notice disobeyed before any legal cause can occur—save by *receiving* rent in the name or for the use of any Association or Society.

“I will give further information as soon as the Bill receives the Royal Assent; but the Finance Committee may be certain that for the present they are quite safe in *every* respect.

“The failure of Peel at Oxford has, after all,

had very little effect on the public mind. It is my opinion that it has made rather a rally in our favour,

“ There is but one obstacle, or rather but one danger—namely, *the king*. It is said that he would still disappoint the measure if he possibly could ; but there seems to be no resource in point of ministry since Wellington and Peel have deserted.

“ Perhaps we are threatened with more hostility on the part of the king than really exists, in order to mitigate our opposition to any objectionable clause in the wings. It is now said that there are to be wings to accompany the Bill, instead of a tail to follow it. As we approach the actual movement, every thing fills one with anxiety.

“ You perceive that I am *at my post*, dinner-speeching, letter writing, &c. I have got the Radicals with me to a man. I was a general without troops until then ; and you know that it is *power* does every thing. If the Catholic Association had not been powerful, we should be still prostrate.

“ Believe me, always,

“ Yours very sincerely,

“ DANIEL O'CONNELL.

“P.S. The fight is over. The king has definitely yielded; but I fear there will be a freehold wing. (Half-after-five.)”

(PRIVATE.)

“March 3, 1829.

“MY DEAR FRIEND,

“I could not get a moment till now on my way down to the House of Commons, where the Committee is to be selected, to give you a sketch of what passed between Brougham and me this day.

“Brougham had about an hour's conversation with me; his object, to convince me that we should accede to a freehold wing if it shall be proposed. He put his arguments as strongly as possible upon the expediency of not throwing out the Relief Bill by opposing the freehold wing, if—*mark, as yet it is* IF—that measure shall be proposed.

“I need not tell you that I availed myself of that opportunity of urging every argument against any such measure. I declared my perpetual and unconquerable hostility to it; I showed that emancipation, accompanied by that wing, would rather irritate than assuage; I

showed him that the people would get into worse hands than ours. In short, he left me convinced that it was the duty of the Whigs to take as decisive a part as possible in preventing the ministry from bringing in such a wing. So stands the matter at present.

“It was *curious* that Brougham should come to me the very day—*the morning of the day*—on which my Committee was and is to be formed.

“Perhaps it was accident, but certainly it was just the day when it was most likely that I should wish to be in favour with the men who might form that Committee.

“In haste,

“Yours most truly,

“DANIEL O’CONNELL.

“The Committee is just struck. I take it to be favourable.

“Lord William Russell is chairman. Almost all voted for the Catholics. An excellent Committee.

LORD W. RUSSELL.

JAMES BROUGHAM.

SIR G. ROBINSON.

ROBERT CLIVE.

E. B. CLIVE.

JOHN STUART.

M. LIDDLE.

T. P. COURTNEY.

M. LOCK.

T. EASTHOPE.

M. CAREW.”

(PRIVATE.)

“ 19, *Bury Street, St. James's, London.*
March 6, 1829.

“ MY DEAR FRIEND,

“ ‘And we will plant a laurel tree,
And we will call it Liberty.’

“ Yes, there is much good. The Committee have unanimously decided in my favour. Peel's bill for emancipation is good—very good; frank, direct, complete; no veto, no control, no payment of the clergy.

“ I always said that when they came to emancipate, they would not care a bulrush about those vetoistical arrangements which so many paltry Catholics from time to time pressed on me as being useful to emancipation.

“ The second Bill is to prevent the extension of monastic institutions, and to prevent the Catholic bishops being called lords. I will stake my existence that I will run a coach-and-six *three times told* through this Act.

“ The third Bill is the freehold wing somewhat modified; that is, reduced to 10*l.* qualification. This *must be opposed in every shape and form.* 1

will write, and transmit to-morrow to Ireland, an address on this subject.

“There should be meetings every where to petition against it; if possible, the Protestants should be urged to join with the Catholics in opposing it.

“We met this day, as usual, at the Thatched House Tavern. The Whigs were in conclave at Sir Francis Burdett’s. I moved a Resolution calling on them to oppose the freehold wing at all hazards, and had it transmitted to them by Mr. O’Gorman; I understand, however, that they have agreed to support it!!!

“Every honest man should join in petitioning on this point without delay. Urge this in every manner you can. Let St. Audeon’s rally. But let them confine their exertions to the freehold wing until the clergy pronounce on the other two clauses. Perhaps an application should be made on these clauses to the clergy; but I only fear the freehold wing.

“Ever yours truly,

“DANIEL O’CONNELL.”

The foregoing will sufficiently prove, if proof indeed were at all required, how utterly unfounded was the paltry allegation then and for some years made against Mr. O'Connell, to the effect that he had bartered the rights of the forty-shilling freeholders for the opening to richer Catholics of the way to honours at the bar, on the bench, and in the senate.

The truth is, he gave the measure for their disfranchisement the most strenuous and energetic opposition.

(PRIVATE.)

"19, *Bury Street, St. James's,*
March 11, 1829.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"By the time that this reaches you, the Association Suppression Act—the Lying Act—the worse than Algerine Act, will be the law of the land. How long it will continue so is another question. I will not be in the House one fortnight when I shall apply for its repeal.

"How mistaken men are who suppose that the history of the world will be over as soon as we are emancipated! Oh! *that* will be the time to *commence* the struggle for popular rights.

"But to the point: as the law stands, the

Finance Committee of the Association can receive no more money; they can sit, however, for making payments and investigating accounts. As to the future, my advice is, that the Catholic rooms should be kept up by a subscription of from five to ten shillings by each individual, to pay current expenses of newspapers, coals, candles, clerks, &c.

“It will serve as a nucleus for talking over Catholic and Irish affairs. Call it the Catholic Reading-rooms. A few months will enable us to do better, but in the mean time a rallying point of this kind is wanting, and a reading-room is just the very best you can have.

“Let me press the necessity of having such an establishment, and put my name, and my sons’, Maurice, Morgan, John, and Dan, as original subscribers. Let us *attempt* to keep it on foot for some months at least, if we can get but ten subscribers. There is no danger of the *Lying Act* affecting us.

“So much for details—now for politics.

“I am exceedingly sorry to say that the Irish forty-shilling freeholders are likely not to get any support in this country. You know already that

we sent a Resolution *to the Whigs* calling upon them to resist the Disfranchisement Bill *at all hazards*. It was I who drew it up, and Purcell O'Gorman took it to Sir Francis Burdett's when they were all assembled. Yet Brougham and all the party gave in. The Opposition, to a man, will vote for it: it almost drives me to despair on this subject!

“I sent Lawless to stir Hunt to get up some English opposition. I begged of O'Gorman Mahon to call upon him this day, and I will also go myself, but I expect nothing. Lawless's expedition has failed—totally failed; Hunt has got *no following*. I was until now convinced that the Radicals were in some power—they are *not*: they are numerous, but they have no leaders, no system, no confidence in either Henry Hunt or William Cobbett,—not the least—not the least.”

The remarks here made on the English Reformers in 1829 apply at the present time, 1849, with almost as much accuracy; and indeed, with the single exception of the Reform Bill times, the English Reformers have uniformly displayed a want of unity of action, a mutual distrust and

jealousy, and a consequent weakness and inefficiency, highly disastrous to the progress of good government.

The successful agitation for the repeal of the Corn-laws cannot be deemed an exception. That agitation was sustained and brought to its triumphant conclusion, by the aid, and the most powerful and influential aid, of many who, whether before or since, never manifested any sympathy with the advocates of political reform. Indeed, several of the latter stood out stoutly and pertinaciously against the abolition of the duties on food: a circumstance of course not much to their credit as Reformers, nor saying much for the soundness and elevation of their views.

It has been often a source of amusement to us, *strangers* in the English Parliament, but a source of amusement not unmingled with considerable pain, to witness the paltry squabbles which disunite the English Reformers, and make them check and embarrass each other in their parliamentary efforts as rudely and effectually as if they had adopted the means in fashion amongst the members of the National Assembly of France, where obnoxious speakers have not infrequently

been pulled down by the tail and collar of their coat.

Mr. O'Connell thus proceeds with his remarks upon the English Reformers:—

“This is the case with the Reformers generally: they are powerless by reason of the people who considered themselves leaders, but who are despicable both from their characters and their vile jealousies and ill-temper.

“It is right that the friends of freedom in Ireland, or at least those in Dublin, should know how little assistance they can expect to receive for the forty-shilling freeholders, from any portion of the English Members of Parliament whatever—*not the least.*

“You will have seen by the Duke of Wellington's speech last night in the Lords, that he is determined to carry the Bill through both Houses rapidly.

“The clause against the Catholic bishops taking a denomination by diocese is confined to *their own acts*, and does not prevent *others* from calling them by any denomination they please.

“ It is one of the most foolish and most abortive clauses ever invented.

“ The clause against the monastic orders is equally so ; I would ride a troop of horse three times through it ; and you will observe, that no person belonging to these orders can be prosecuted before any magistrate, or by any private person. The prosecution must be in the Court of Exchequer only, and by the Attorney General alone.

“ The Emancipation Bill is an excellent one in every respect—ay, in every respect ; for although it seems to exclude me, yet, in point of fact, I wish it were passed in its present form.

“ The freehold wing is as little objectionable in its details as such a Bill can possibly be. It will make the right of voting clear and distinct ; its only evil is the increase of the qualification.

“ Very faithfully yours,

“ DANIEL O’CONNELL.”

“ *London, March 12, 1829.*

“ MY DEAR FRIEND,

“ The Irish forty-shilling freeholders have no friends amongst the English members ; the Whigs

and all are against them. Even Lord Grey declares he will not oppose the Disfranchisement Bill. This is cruel—very cruel.

“Hunt or Cobbett can do nothing. They have not one particle of *following*. Our petition will be presented this day against the disfranchising wing; and we must have many petitions from Ireland. We must put on record our decided hostility to it in every shape and form, so as to enable us hereafter, *and soon*, to do battle in favour of a restoration of this right.

“I deem it my duty to give this information, that the gentlemen, having early notice, may act accordingly.

“I beg now, as a member of the Finance Committee of the Catholic Association, to make a motion. I hope that I shall be allowed to make *one*:—it shall be the only one. I am quite serious.

“I wish to move that a sum of one hundred guineas be transmitted to Mr. Secretary O’Gorman to defray his expenses in London. I implore of you, my good friend, to canvass for me on this motion.

“Mrs. O’Gorman is with him; and as he is not rich, we should certainly prevent his being at any

expense on his own account. Before the Committee meet, show this letter to Rev. Wm. L'Estrange, &c. &c. I feel deeply anxious to pay O'Gorman this mark of my personal attention; and if the Emancipation Bill pass, I trust Government may be induced to pay the Catholic body the compliment of making a provision for him, by giving him such an office as he is well suited to fill, and as would increase his comforts.

“Do not show this letter to any person but to those who will feel its confidential and delicate nature.

“Very sincerely yours,

“DANIEL O'CONNELL.”

The next letter speaks for itself.

“*The first day of Freedom!*

April 14, 1829.

“MY DEAR FRIEND,

“I cannot allow this day to pass without expressing my congratulations to the honest men of ‘Burgh Quay’ (Corn Exchange) on the subject of the Relief Bill.

“It is one of the greatest triumphs recorded in

history—a bloodless revolution, more extensive in its operation than any other political change that could take place. I say *political*, to contrast it with *social* changes, which might break to pieces the framework of society.

“This is a *good beginning*, and now, if I can get Catholics and Protestants to join, something solid and substantial may be done for all.

“It is clear, that without gross mismanagement, it will be impossible to allow misgovernment any longer in Ireland. It will not be my fault, if there be not a ‘Society for the Improvement of Ireland,’ or something else of that description, to watch over the rising liberties of Ireland.

“I am busily making my arrangements respecting my own seat. As soon as they are complete, you shall hear from me.

“I reckon with confidence on being in the House on the 28th instant; the day to which the adjournment is to take place. I think my right *now* perfectly clear, and beyond any reasonable doubt.

“Wish all and every one of ‘the Order of Liberators’ joy in my name. Let us not show any insolence of triumph; but I confess to you,

if I were in Dublin I should like *to laugh at the Corporators.*

“I am writing a congratulatory address to the people. It will appear, I hope, on Easter Monday in Dublin.

“Believe me, &c. &c.

“DANIEL O’CONNELL.”

The “Order of Liberators” here alluded to was one of those casual expedients that stimulated from time to time the flagging energies of agitation. Every one who could boast of a service rendered to the cause—a popular right asserted—a local tyranny checked—an election-triumph promoted, or whatever the service might be, became entitled to the medal of the “Order.” And numbers who claimed to be enrolled during the three years of its existence, (from the Waterford election of 1826, when the powerful Beresford family were for the first time beaten, until the putting down of the Catholic Association in 1829,) abundantly proved the value set upon this little distinction.

The recommendation “*not to show any insolence*

of triumph," was most entirely congenial to the disposition of the people.

In one of the letters of the celebrated Grattan, given in the collection of his correspondence, by his son, the present Henry Grattan, M.P. for the county of Meath, there is a comparison of the manner in which the popular triumphs of 1780-82 and that of the English faction in 1801 were respectively received.

"There were two days in the Irish history that I can never forget:—The one, that in which we gained our freedom, (1782). How great the triumph! How *moderate*—how well it was borne!—with what *dignity*! what *absence of vulgar triumph*!

"The other was the day we lost our Parliament. It was a savage act, done by a set of assassins brought into the House to sell the country and to sell themselves. They did not belong to Ireland: some were soldiers, all were slaves! Everything was shame, and hurry, and base triumph!" *

The manner in which the Catholics received the news of their liberation was such as that

* Grattan's Life, by his Son, vol. ii.

described in the first part of the foregoing. We got no credit for it from our exasperated enemies; but, nevertheless, throughout the whole of Ireland there was a peaceful inoffensiveness, an abstinence from insult, and a repression even of the most pardonable degree of exultation, without a single exception in any quarter.

One signal, most *rational* and *formidable* revenge was taken by the younger Orangemen of Dublin upon my father. A runaway crowd of them took advantage of darkness to assemble in front of his house in Merrion Square, and break the *drawing-room windows!* After one discharge, they fled; luckily for themselves, as a crowd gathered at once.

The next letters refer particularly to the long-discussed question of Mr. O'Connell's claim to take his seat in Parliament, as Member for the county of Clare; for which county he had been returned at the memorable and eventful election of the preceding year (1828), and of course previous to the passing of the Catholic Relief Bill.

Up to the month of April, 1829, he had forborne, upon good advice, the making of any effort to assert his claim; and he was now recommended

to come forward, in the idea that a parliament which had just distinguished itself by so grand an act of liberality, would not consent to "throw away the meed of its large honours" for the sake of inflicting a petty personal disqualification. The expectation was by no means idle. There is now little question that he would have been permitted to take his seat, but for the personal antipathy and special opposition of George IV.

This personal antipathy was shown in a ludicrous and on every account indecent manner, on an occasion which presented itself about this time.

From the period of George the Fourth's visit to Ireland, in 1820, when the fairest hopes were entertained, and deliberately and specially encouraged from ministerial quarters, as to concessions to be made to the Catholics, wrongs to be redressed, wants attended to, &c. &c., Mr. O'Connell, disgusted and disheartened at the total breach and disregard of the royal pledges then understood to be given, had not attended a royal levee until the bringing forward of the measure of Catholic Emancipation in 1829.

When, after the usual amount of pushing and

struggling and squeezing, and inconvenience of all sorts, that is to be undergone on such occasions, he reached the door of the Presence Chamber, and had his name announced, he saw the king's lips moving as he advanced, and for a moment thought the words, whatever they might be, were addressed to him; the king looking intently at him while speaking. However, their sound not having reached him, and no farther sign being made, Mr. O'Connell made his bow, and backed out, thinking no more of the occurrence for the time.

But some weeks afterwards, he saw in a Scotch paper a statement, which on making particular and close inquiry he found to be literally true, that the words uttered by the king, as he approached, had been nothing more nor less than the elegant and *Christian* ejaculation of "*D—— the fellow!*"

Mr. O'Connell's ultimate rejection by the House of Commons, on his refusal to take the disgraceful oath tendered to him at the bar, is too well known to require any special mention here. The House, which had previously manifested a considerable inclination to show favour to his claim for admission, followed the beck of the Ministry,

when at length, in obedience to their royal master's positive injunctions, they declared against Mr. O'Connell; and thus, contrary to very general expectation, (including his own,) the election of the latter was declared to be null and void.

The only result of this act of petty and childish spite, was to send Mr. O'Connell back to another and easy triumph in the county of Clare, and make him still more popular in Ireland than ever, on account of his thus being singled out for exclusion at such a moment and in such a way.

The following extracts from his correspondence will show what were his own feelings as the important occasion approached, and *when it came*.

*“ Bury Street, St. James's, London,
April 29, 1829.*

“ MY DEAR JAMES,

“ I have great pleasure in telling you, that I have ascertained that there is to be no opposition to my taking my seat on the part of the Government, unless they are compelled to it by the Speaker and Mr. Wynne. So that if the Whigs stand by me, I am certain of being seated. This you may confidently communicate to —, as well as —; and my real friend Barrett may

announce that intelligence has come from London that the universal belief was, that the Ministers would suffer Mr. O'Connell to take his seat for Clare at his own risk, and without giving him any opposition.

“More to-morrow—the post is at the door.

“Ever yours,

“DANIEL O'CONNELL.”

“19, Bury Street, London,
April 30, 1829.

* * * * *

“I am making my arrangements for my seat. I suppose you will hear of me *“as of”*—in the phrase of us lawyers—this day week. If Mr. Wynne and the tail of the Grenvilles behave well to me, I am sure to succeed.

“To-morrow I shall have digested my new letter. It will contain my view of the subject, and my, I trust, convincing arguments in favour of my right to take my seat. If Lord Nugent help me, as I hope he will, my success is not doubtful.

“You will see the absolute necessity of not allowing these names or any communication from me to get into print. But the Irish people may

be cheered by the prospect of my taking my seat, and being thus enabled to work for them.

“I heard that the Duke of Wellington is determined not to increase the currency, but to resort to an income-tax. This is the last *private* report, and is believed by many. Income from the funds would of course come under such a tax. The Subletting Act will be materially changed this session. Of this I am assured, and I hope the assurance will be realized.

* * * * *

“Ever, my dear James,

“Your obliged and affectionate

“DANIEL O'CONNELL.”

“19, Bury Street, London,
May 1, 1829.

“MY DEAR JAMES,

* * * * *

“I spent all day working at my case for the House of Commons. I have every hope that this day week will see me at my post in the House.

“I intend to take an *immediate* active part in

the proceedings. I need not say to you how impatient I am to be useful.

“ Every hour increases the favourable accounts (or at least *reports*) of the intention of the Ministry to allow me to take my seat quietly. And my present object is simply to make such a case in point as will render it impossible for Mr. Sugden, or anybody else, to give me any effectual opposition.

“ Believe me ever

“ Your obliged and affectionate

“ DANIEL O’CONNELL.”

“ Bury Street, London,
May 12, 1829.

“ MY DEAR FRIEND,

“ I was unwilling to write to you while I remained in a state of uncertainty, with respect to the course which it was right for me to take.

“ I certainly felt more than unwilling to raise any question personal to myself, as long as it could be possible to consider my claim hostile to the Ministry. This was but an act of *gratitude* on my part, for the manly and excellent Emancipation

Bill they carried through both Houses. I call that Bill excellent, although there are parts of it, indeed, which deserve any other appellation; but the Bill has in itself the principle of *improvement*, and its defects will soon be effaced by the inevitable results of parliamentary and popular information.

“ I was all the more desirous to pay this tribute to the Ministry, because, if I should get into Parliament, I can *never* be a ministerial member.

“ I however ascertained, that my bringing forward my claims would not and could not be considered by the Ministry in any hostile point of view.

“ You will perceive that there is not any violent hostility in the Government Papers to my right. This is, I take it, a decisive symptom of the absence of Ministerial opposition.

“ You have, of course, read my letter which was published yesterday in the Times. I have the pleasure to tell you that I am every moment receiving fresh proofs of the impression which that letter has made. In fact, the law is *quite* and clearly in my favour.

“ They may do what they please with me, but

this I consider that I have put beyond all possibility of doubt—namely, that by refusing to allow me to sit, they will do a palpable and a gross injustice. I confess that I do not expect anything so inconsistent with every sense of right. On the contrary, I have reason to be convinced that I shall meet with little, if any, opposition.

“ Unfortunately, the Speaker is a nephew of Lord Chancellor Manners, and on that account alone has some claim to my *apprehensions*.

“ But I hope he is an honourable man, and will listen to no other counsels than those of good sense and duty. In fact, it would be exceedingly wrong of them to interfere, unless expressly called on by the House, or some member of the House.

“ If then the Speaker does not go out of his way, and, in fact, make himself the scapegoat of party, there can be no doubt of my admission. I *repeat* that I do not anticipate any personal objection on his part, nor anything inconsistent with his high rank and station.

“ Upon the whole, then, my course is determined. I will, please God, make all my previous arrangements to-morrow and Thursday morning, and on Friday, *peremptorily*, I will go down and

address the House. That day is fixed on for my taking my seat.

“ Yours, my dear friend, most sincerely,

“ DANIEL O'CONNELL.”

“ *Bury Street, May 13, 1829.*

“ MY DEAR JAMES,

“ All appears well: my last letter has had great success, simply because it is unanswerable. The law is with me in all its bearings, and, as yet, I have every reason to think that the opposition to me, if any, will be feeble. In forty-eight hours I shall know more.

“ I was this day at the King's Bench, at half-after-nine, and took the new oath. So far, I have *progressed*, as the Americans say. I am now certain of getting *into* the House—that is, *as far as the table*. How much beyond that, I know not. I will then call for the new oath, and if it be administered, then the contest is over. If they refuse to administer it, I will take my seat without it, and put upon others to make any motion they may please.

“ Since I wrote the foregoing paragraph, I have

ascertained that the Government declare positively that they will not make it a *Government* question, nor give me any *Government* opposition.

“ I think, therefore, that my prospects are the very fairest: but one must not be too sure of anything to come.” * * * * *

(PRIVATE.)

“ *Bury Street, London,
May 14, 1829.*”

“ MY DEAR FRIEND,

“ The hour of combat approaches! At half-past three to-morrow the question is to be tried.

“ I have the judgment and opinion of three-fourths of the House with me, as I am fully convinced; but that will be entirely useless if the Government behave to me faithlessly, and if the Speaker take a strong part against me. However, that is not to be apprehended; and at all events everything appears at present to bear a favourable aspect.

“ I have great declarations of support from various quarters; — Brougham, Burdett, Lord

Althorpe, Baines, and many, very many other great names, are active to assist me. I repeat, that if the Government does not take a very decided part against me, I am quite safe. It is *admitted* at all hands that I have proved my right.

“Have you heard of the conduct of the English Catholics towards me? They have a club here called the ‘Cis-Alpine,’—a bad name, you will say. They had been much divided amongst themselves, and were now about all to re-unite. I agreed to be proposed into it, when, behold! they met the day before yesterday, and *black-beaned* me.

“However, I believe it has knocked up the club, as Howard of Corby, and several others at once declared that they would never again come near it.

“Mr. Blount has behaved exceedingly well on this occasion—no man could behave better. I believe there are many of them highly indignant at the conduct of the rest; and at all events, I heartily forgive them all. But it was a strange thing of them to do—it was a comical ‘testimonial’ of my services in emancipating them. It would be well, perhaps, if I could *un-emancipate* some of them.

“There is a petition from the parish of Duncarvon for the old Association lustre; it could not be better bestowed. I beg of you to endeavour to get it for my friend, the Rev. Mr. Fogarty.

“There are also demands from Clare; and I hope *those* are particularly attended to. I think there ought to be 20*l.* or 30*l.* sent down to Clare, to assist in the new registry of freeholders. Send for Richard Scott, and consult him on the subject.

* * * * *

“I long to shake hands again with all the worthies at 12, *Burgh Quay*. How I hate *that* affectation! I hope that Staunton is allowed to continue his weekly papers to the churchwardens at my expense, if not at that of the Finance Committee.

“Yours, &c. &c. &c.”

“MY DEAR JAMES,

“I have only to communicate these particulars. My letter has done wonders. Tierney, Agar Ellis, Alexander Baring, Charles Wynne, &c. have declared it conclusive.

“Lord Duncannon has been with me, and

Friday is fixed for the grand experiment. The post of Sunday will carry you the news.

“ In haste.

“ Yours affectionately, &c.

“ DANIEL O'CONNELL.”

“ *London, May 21, 1829.*

“ MY DEAR JAMES,

“ You cannot form the least idea of my first appearance on the parliamentary stage. My speech was a dry argument; but it is said to have been in manner and tact beyond what could have been conceived, and all that it should be. Lord Grey, Lord Lansdowne, Lord Anglesea, &c. are among the warmest admirers of it.

“ If I be put out for Clare this night, which is very probable, I have had a kind of an offer of a *free* seat for the rest of the session, for a borough, and to address Clare at once. Let not this matter get into the newspapers.

* * * * *

“ I must conclude, as I am going down to the

House. I expect little from Spring Rice's motion.

"Most faithfully yours,

"DANIEL O'CONNELL."

"May 22, 1829.

* * * * *

"You will see *I am out*, and out for the session, of course. We must be stirring. Work the press for me. I am myself preparing my address to the Clare men. It will, I hope, appear to-morrow. I do not mince the matter in it.

"Consider of forming a Dublin Committee at once to conduct the Clare election. It cannot, however, come on till the month of July at soonest. Vesey Fitzgerald will not attempt the county again. That much is *certain*.

"In haste, believe me

"Yours most sincerely,

"DANIEL O'CONNELL."

The next letter has certainly no connexion whatever with the preceding, nor with any political subject. But it recounts an incident of interest ;

when Mr. O'Connell had a narrow escape of being killed, in the autumn of the same year as that which saw Emancipation carried. It will be seen that his usual activity and promptness of expedient did not desert him on this occasion.

*“Darrynane Abbey,
October 13, 1829.*

“MY DEAR JAMES,

* * * * *

“You may be quite sure that I will be in Dublin as soon as I possibly can.

“But my brother James is laid up with a sad accident. We were coming from his house to Cahirciveen in the mail cart, when, as we were going along the Drung Hill road, one horse stumbled and broke the pole, and then both horses started off at full speed along the precipice.

“There is no sufficient guard wall, and we might have gone down several hundred feet in a few minutes. The driver roared to us to jump out, which we foolishly did as the car was going at full speed. I fell on my shoulders and back of my head, but came off with some sound bruises and the stunning of a few seconds. As to James,

he came on his right arm, and broke it between the shoulder and elbow. I sent off for surgeons in two directions, cut up a shirt into bandages, and had splints made before Dr. Barry arrived. He at once set the bone. This is the fourth day, and, thank God! James is going on as well as possible.

“You may rely, however, on my being in Dublin as speedily as possible.

“Ever yours,

“Most sincerely,

“DANIEL O’CONNELL.”

CHAPTER III.

INTEREST EXCITED BY MR. O'CONNELL'S LETTERS.—THE CLARE ELECTION—THE “PROGRESS.”—TRADES POLITICAL UNION.—MR. O'CONNELL RETURNS TO LONDON—HIS LETTERS.

THE interest which the receipt of these letters excited in Dublin was extreme. I do not speak of the interest and anxiety experienced among Mr. O'Connell's own family, the extent of which can be easily conjectured; but amongst his old fellow-labourers in the Catholic cause, of all ranks, there was the strongest anxiety and eagerness to know the contents of each *despatch* as it arrived; and the “Parliamentary Intelligence Office,” (as the species of reading-room and temporary headquarters of agitation had come to be designated,) was crowded for hours after the arrival of the English mail.

According as the letters happened to be ad-

dressed to Mr. Edward Dwyer or Mr. Sugrue, either of these excellent gentlemen found himself, greatly to his personal discomfort, the centre of attraction, the observed of all observers, and the unfortunate victim of the most incessant and persevering *boring*. And whenever a stray missive came addressed to some other of the ancient "*generals of division*" in the agitation, the individual was for the nonce elevated into the utmost importance; and usually assumed an air of mystery and consequential reserve that procured him double attention, till the contents of his letter were at last *squeezed* out, and found perhaps to be of the most ordinary character, or referring to quite other matters than the all-absorbing controversy in London as to Mr. O'Connell's seat.

Those who happen to pass in the present time the dingy premises, (if they be yet standing, and have not long ago fulfilled their evident threat of tumbling down,) in a still more dingy street, (Stephen's Street,) where the "Parliamentary Intelligence Office" was located, can form little idea of the bustle and stir that prevailed there for a few months of 1829; large crowds being frequently assembled outside the house, while shoals

of gentlemen, many of them now in high official position, were pouring in and out, to hear and to bear away the news of the progress of Mr. O'Connell's case, and the chances of his success.

From the correspondence given in the last chapter, it will be seen that his hopes were high, up to the last moment, of being admitted to take his seat; and they had not become so without very considerable justification. The question involved in his case was complicated and nice; and, as usual, the efforts of lawyers at either side—men of the longest practice and highest skill and reputation in their profession—did not tend to unravel its difficulties, but rather to mystify matters still more, in the eyes of “laymen” at any rate, if not in their own. The consequence was, that many of those who had to decide upon it, finding that such grave doubts prevailed where they had thought all was clear, well defined, and positive against the claim, inclined to a manly and generous course, and began to think of giving the claimant the benefit of those doubts. In this creditable disposition, however, few ultimately persevered, after it had become finally known, and known at the eleventh hour, that the king

absolutely and utterly forbade his ministers to permit Mr. O'Connell to take his seat.

In the summer of that year I accompanied him to the county of Clare, when going to his new election. All down the line of road from Dublin to Limerick his progress was a continued triumph. The popular "*posse comitatus*" turned out at every mile of the way; and the post horses, where not actually impeded by thronging thousands lying in wait for us, were urged on from stage to stage by the shouting and running of the people, instead of the traditionary *red-hot poker* which figures in the well-known pictures of "Posting in Ireland."

To those who witnessed for the first time (as I then did) one of these "progresses" of Mr. O'Connell, the scene was most exciting and curious indeed. Literally the *whole country* turned out! By some extraordinary instinct or other, some carrying of the matter by the birds of the air, his approach, even when his journeys were most unpremeditated, and in no way previously announced, (because often not previously resolved upon,) the population of the districts through which he was to pass came to know of his

journey; and from not merely the cabins and fields close to the line of road, but from those distant a mile and upwards—in short, from every point whence there was the least chance of arriving in time to salute him in passing—men, women, and children, were to be seen running at the top of their speed, and waving hats and fragments of garments, or green boughs, shouting all the while at the top of their voices.

The poor old women used particularly to attract my father's attention. Some few of them, throwing aside for the moment their load of years, used to skip and jump as merrily as the youngest there, and join the *screech* with their cracked voices, greatly to the amusement of the impertinent youngsters of the crowd. But the majority dropped upon their knees as the carriage approached, and raising their aged hands and eyes to heaven, were to be heard praying fervently, and invoking blessings and mercies upon the man who was labouring to upraise a fallen nation, and to vindicate an oppressed creed.

The object of their prayers ever seemed most profoundly affected by these scenes; and I have often heard him say that he valued one prayer of

these poor old creatures more highly and deeply than the proudest honour which this world can confer.

Although his re-election took place without opposition, still every precaution was observed to prevent the possibility of being taken by surprise. All the canvassing and polling arrangements were made as punctually and particularly as though a desperate contest were imminent; and very probably this preparedness on our part had a good deal to do with the fact of his not being opposed when it came to the point.

We were greatly surprised on entering, and afterwards when traversing the town, (*Ennis*, the chief town of the county, and therefore the locality of the election,) to find ourselves passing under *white* flags at every step. Inquiry was made whether this colour had been adopted as significant of a disposition to show the *white feather*, or what might be the meaning; and we received for a solution of the mystery, the information that these were the veritable *green* flags of the *great* election of the preceding year, faded and bleached now into the semblance of the Bourbon flag of France.

After his unopposed re-election, and the tri-

umphant chairing which he was compelled to undergo, Mr. O'Connell retired for a short period to Darrynane Abbey, to recruit himself for new battles, and early in the winter returned to Dublin.

Here the Repeal agitation was beginning to stir the masses. The "Trades' Political Union," then an important name, had begun its meetings with rude vigour and most uncompromising earnestness; and the working-men of the individual trades began to come together, and pass resolutions in favour of the restoration of the Legislature of Ireland. Public meetings and public dinners of the other sections of the "Agitators" were also frequent; and everything announced that the popular strength was being knit again to seek new conquests, and recover more of ancient liberties and privileges.

A beautiful scene—afterwards often repeated, but never so impressive as on the first occasion—took place early in January, 1830, when the "Trades' Political Union" presented an address to Mr. O'Connell. They marched in greater numbers, and with greater display than ever known before, and indeed, than on any subsequent occasion; each trade marshalled by itself, with its

own leaders and banners—the latter being quite new and richly decorated (at a very large expense) for the occasion, to Merrion Square, and formed in front of Mr. O'Connell's house, while their President, (no less a personage than an Attorney-General at present in one of the dependencies of Great Britain, and one discharging his important duties with the highest credit to himself and benefit to the public service,) attended by a *staff* of vice-presidents, entered the house, and on the balcony of the front drawing-room read and presented Mr. O'Connell with the address.

The response was of course given in the same place, and with all due form, amid the ringing cheers of the enormous multitudes that filled the streets and enclosure of Merrion Square.

A few days after, Mr. O'Connell proceeded to Kingstown, (seven miles by the coach road, the railroad not then existing,) to embark for England, and was attended throughout every yard of the way by a vast crowd, blessing him and wishing him success in the new career about to open to him.

No obstacle existed, of course, to his taking his seat this time ; and he did so accordingly at the

beginning of February. His first impression of the Legislature was not very flattering, nor did he find it much improve upon further acquaintance.

“ 5, Maddox Street, London,
Feb. 9, 1830.

“ MY DEAR JAMES,

* * * * *

“ I am fast learning the tone and temper of the House, and in a week or so you will find me a constant speaker. I will soon be struggling to bring forward Irish business.

“ I am exceedingly amused by the exhibitions of the human mind that surround me. Such a finished —— as —— is, I never witnessed. Indeed, there is more folly and nonsense *in* the House, than anywhere out of it. There is a low and subservient turn of thinking; and there is a submission to authority, which is to the last degree debasing.

“ In haste, yours, &c. &c.

“ DANIEL O'CONNELL.”

The next letters are of much later date in the same year.

“*London, Saturday, Nov. 6, 1830.*”

* * * * *

“I cannot write much to-day. I was hitting right and left last night. * * * I have heard nothing more of the attempt to negotiate about a change of Ministry; nor shall I until after this letter goes off to you; but I do not myself think that the Duke can stand. The exasperation about the King’s Speech is extreme.

“Nothing can equal the temper of the people in their detestation of this Ministry. It would surprise and amuse you to see how popular I am grown. I refer you to the Irish newspaper correspondents for more particulars. But you may be sure to hear *from me* on every debate; and to hear from me to the purpose.

“I am delighted to perceive that the Anti-Union spirit is alive, and that its meetings continue with such vigour. The “*Saint Andrew’s*,” &c. was a delightful treat. Apropos of *treats*—I hope you have another political *breakfast* on foot. The conceit is admirable.

“You may there get gentlemen to undertake particular counties, so as to be responsible for

petitions from that county. In short, let the next breakfast add *business* to *speechifying*. Improve on this, and give the *boat a shove*.

“You cannot conceive what a change has occurred already in the public mind here, on the subject of the Repeal of the Union. It is not only *practicable*, but certain, if we persevere as we ought to do.

“I intend to-morrow to write a letter on the subject of the expense of petitions. Get it printed. You know that I do not wish my letters to *you* to be printed. Read to yourself the letter in the cover; it relates to private business. Believe me always

“Yours sincerely, &c.

“DANIEL O'CONNELL.”

“London, Nov. 9, 1830.

* * * * *

“The times are exceedingly critical; this is just the period when good, wise, and considerate men should urge their claims for amelioration.

“This is emphatically the moment to get as

many places as possible to petition for the Repeal of the Union.

“The successors of the Wellington Administration, whoever they shall be, will not be able to resist the cry of the people, if really raised. We shall see a daily progress towards the principle of democratic liberty. It is most important that those successors should be convinced that the Repeal of the Union is desired by *all* the people of Ireland, with the exception of a few paltry jobbers.

“Tell this to every person who comes to the Rooms. Let every man know from me, that it is my decided opinion that we may have an Irish Parliament soon, if the voice of the Irish nation shall be expressed by petitions so numerous as to place beyond any doubt the anxiety of Ireland for that measure.

“I do not say this lightly. I am convinced that what I say to you is of great importance to be attended to—and yet we are an *uncertain* race. Before Emancipation, I saw that it would be necessary for us to have a rallying point for the future struggles of the country. I was, therefore, very anxious to get up a place for public meetings.

The theatre in Great Brunswick-street was to be had cheaply, but ——— and others disliked the owner, and I was overruled. Those who overruled me all promised to find another and a better place; they all saw the necessity of having a place for public meetings. We had funds *then*, but not one step was taken by anybody but me to get that other place. I failed entirely.

“In fact, that theatre would now be quite a *treasure* for all kinds of useful agitation; at present the want of such a thing is severely felt, and each day it will be more and more so. Its utility would be constant.

“Every parish in Dublin would certainly meet if they could but be certain of having the use of a proper meeting-place. It is quite clear that the store in Stephen Street is suited, admirably suited for the purpose; and now there is a fastidiousness about the street, as not being *fashionable* enough, although it is within four or five minutes' walk of either Stephen's Green, College Green, or Dame Street: where will those who reject that spot find another?

“I am perfectly content to become tenant at once to any other, provided it shall be found; but it

would disgust any other man save myself from politics, to find a practical measure of this sort abandoned, or postponed first and then abandoned, upon the score of a paltry fastidiousness respecting the situation of the place of meeting.

“Is there any man who does not know that but for getting the constant use of Clarendon Street Chapel we never could have got up the Catholic Association? We cannot have chapels now; why then should not we have a perpetual substitute?

“I implore of all *real* Anti-Unionists to consider well of this; and to lay their best thoughts together to procure a comfortable and extensive place for public meetings. We cannot do without one.

“Having thus vented my *spleen*, I come to the politics of the day.

“Every body says that the Duke of Wellington must resign; he will, however, cling to office as long as he possibly can, and I am convinced nothing will induce Peel to quit his secretaryship but absolute necessity; yet every body *insists* that they must resign. I myself cannot see how it is possible for them to go on.

“Now every change must be favourable. The new men are of necessity weak. It is calculated that the leaders of a new Cabinet will be Lords Grey and Lansdowne; as yet, however, I fancy that the resignation of Wellington has not been actually sent in.

“Since I began this paragraph, however, I hear that the Marquis of Lansdowne is to be at the head of the *Incomers*. *Nous verrons*, as they say elsewhere. The riot last night was a mere tumult, easily put down by the police, though they are not armed; yet, certainly, the King's shrinking from going into the city is calculated to encourage the tumultuous in the interior parts of England.

“There never was a more critical or important period, or one in which an extensive demand for the Repeal of the Union would have a better effect. I am now anxious to remain in Parliament. I think some good may be done in the House, or rather through the House. I am determined to *stick* to it as long as *I can*.

“Believe me to be,

“Yours most sincerely,

“DANIEL O'CONNELL.

“ * * * * * As soon as I have any news to communicate, you shall hear again from me, but at present I am all anxiety to hear from Ireland.

“ If the people will keep quiet, and allow me to regulate, I think I am certain of procuring the Repeal of the Union. This may be called vanity. Well, I *am* vain: I thought before I left Ireland that I was the best-abused man in the world, but I now perceive that I have not received half the wages which are due to me for being the faithful and persevering friend of the people.

“ Believe me to be,

“ Yours most sincerely,

“ DANIEL O’CONNELL.”

In the foregoing letter there is much that might be written at the present day. We are in Ireland at present in a state as it were of political paralysis, and although matters may mend a little, and some symptoms of political life again become discernible, there is little hope of any effectual concentration of public opinion in Ireland, without a rallying point in a fixed place of meeting.

Conciliation Hall—that most convenient and excellent place of meeting, built with the people’s

money, and that has earned such odium with the enemies of the people, by reason of the services rendered to Ireland within its walls—must shortly be sold, or given up, for the mere ground-rent, for the want of but a little effort; and thus an effective rallying place lost to those who yet remain true to the people's cause. The want of it will yet be severely felt; but at present there seems no help for it.

The next two letters refer to Lord Anglesea's second visit to Ireland, and to the desire that was generally felt to mark the national sense of his former good-will towards Ireland by a public procession to receive him; notwithstanding that some ugly rumours as to the evil influence acquired over him by some whispering "malignants" of the old ascendancy fashion began to take form and likelihood, and to receive credence:—

"London, Nov. 29, 1830.

* * * * *

"I approve of preparing for a procession to meet the Marquis of Anglesea, on his return to the Vice-Royalty of Ireland; and I should think that it would not be at all amiss, but very much the

contrary, if Marcus Costello were to head the procession.

“ Lord Anglesea, however, does not go over for at least another fortnight or three weeks, and there will be time enough to countermand the procession of Lord Anglesea, should he be betrayed into making unpopular appointments in Ireland.

“ At present, what appears fixed one day is totally altered the next; or, at the least, it is so unfixed, that nothing appears settled. There is an immense deal of low intrigue, and ——— is dabbling in the matter up to the elbows.

“ What I want to find out is, what is to be done for Ireland? They *say*, a great deal,—but what *is it*? Let me know that.

“ Such is my question. As to Spring Rice’s ‘nineteen Bills,’ they may all be despatched in one word—*fudge*!

“ We shall soon see, I again fear, that the Marquis of Anglesea is getting into bad hands. The only good thing about him is his determination, which is fixed, to pack off the Gregorys, &c., from the Castle.

“ I am sorry you had not ‘Resolutions’ at the last

breakfast. The Government certainly will not meddle with any orderly public meeting. You know that Lord Anglesea's own letter to Mr. Kertland is quite a pledge upon that point; and I should have already put on its legs a new association, but that I wish to see the new Government actually under way, and the Duke of Northumberland out of Ireland, before we form another, and arrange as to funds.

“ This alone prevents me from at once beginning. But, depend on it, I will *meet* Lord Anglesea and his new Government.

“ Believe me, &c. &c.

“ DANIEL O'CONNELL.”

“ *London, Wednesday, Dec. 1, 1830.*

* * * * *

“ My present opinion is, that it is better to let the Marquis of Anglesea come in quietly, without any show or procession. I decidedly think the Anti-Unionists ought not to give him any *glorification*. This is the result of my deliberate judgment. Abandon, then, all thoughts of our

friends joining in the procession, unless the people, against my advice, desire it.

“ If they do, let them be gratified ; but mix the strongest Anti-Unionism with your honours.

“ The new Government of Ireland is being organized. These things are certain,—that young Stanley” (the present Lord Stanley) “ goes to Ireland as Chief Secretary, and that Mr. Doherty is out of office, and will not get *any* situation under the Government.

“ I have reason to believe that Lord Plunkett will be the new Chancellor.

“ Depend upon it, that the attempt to arrest the progress of Anti-Unionism will be a complete failure, as nothing solid or substantial for the good of the Irish people will, or indeed *can*, be done by these Ministers, or any British Ministers.

“ I am sincerely sorry to hear that ‘ the patriots ’ are so insensible to the necessity of having a place of meeting of their own. The store at the back of the premises affords such an opportunity of making an admirable place of meeting, that I am almost disgusted at the apathy, or *small* motives, which prevent its being used for that purpose.

“ I will, if I can afford it, be myself at the expense of putting it into proper shape and form. We can never be independent until we have a place of our own to hold an ‘aggregate meeting.’ I was thrown out of the theatre in Brunswick Street by miserable jealousies.

“ Yours, &c. &c.

“ DANIEL O'CONNELL.”

Before concluding these extracts from Mr. O'Connell's correspondence, which I have thought might be of interest in a work referring to the scenes of parliamentary “*agitation*,” in and out of the House of Commons, in which he was so prominent a figure, parts of two other letters that have chanced to be among those of the years 1829 and 1830, from which I have selected, may be given, although dated some years previously, and one of them not referring to *home* politics at all.

The first will show what confident hopes were entertained, and with abundant justification, of a much earlier settlement of the question of Catholic Emancipation.

*"Cooke's Hotel, Albemarle Street, London,
March 2, 1825.*

"MY DEAR JAMES,

"I believe I may venture to say that *we are to be emancipated*. The tide has turned in our favour; and the reaction of the injustice done us has contributed much to our *promised* success.

"I cannot write more to-day on politics; but I am in the highest hopes. *I believe* Lord Liverpool will take up the question. More to-morrow. I got your letter yesterday, but could not answer it till now. To-morrow I will write to you again, and at length." * * *

Then follow some directions about law papers connected with the cases in which he was engaged, and which he had to leave unattended to, when suddenly required by the necessities of the Catholic cause to go to London.

Also some of the harassing details of arrangements to meet various portions of the pecuniary engagements which he had contracted early in life by a too great readiness in going security and accepting bills for a party who left him in the lurch. These engagements hampered and harassed

him during upwards of twenty years of his life; and, in fact, made that life often miserable. The letter thus terminates:—

“The truth is, I will sacrifice everything to stay here to get Emancipation. I have reason to hope that everything ecclesiastical will be satisfactorily settled. I *know* this. I will remain here, at *all events*, another week, and if the O'Hara case does not go to trial, I will remain here another fortnight at the least.

“In great haste,

“Yours most faithfully,

“DANIEL O'CONNELL.

“James Sugrue, Esq.”

This letter was written after a personal interview with Lord Plunkett, to which Mr. O'Connell had been specially invited. The noble Lord himself was deceived as to the real intentions of the Ministry of the day; and it is therefore not to be wondered at if Mr. O'Connell were deceived. The hopes of the Catholics were raised to the highest pitch, only to be the more rudely dashed to the earth.

Some credit for prophecy might be claimed for him on the strength of the few lines about France, with which I conclude these extracts. They were written to the same party, Mr. Sugrue, and preceded, like all his multitudinous letters to the same truly kind and truly devoted friend, with money-details of the same harassing nature, and originating similarly with those already alluded to.

The date is the 7th October, 1824, from Bordeaux, whither he had gone to meet his family, which had then been for a year in the south of France.

“My stay at Tours, whither we are now journeying, will be very short; after I see my family established there, I will see you, please God, early in November; certainly before the first business-day of Michaelmas Term. I will be myself, therefore, in Dublin before the bills become due.

“My opinion of France and of Frenchmen is not raised by a near inspection. Their climate is to me detestable; nor can I endure the parched and sunburnt appearance of the country. After all, poor Ireland is the spot—if she had but justice.

“ The French seem very discontented. In truth, they are full of all manner of uncharitableness. The Bourbons are, indeed, far from being popular. I should not be surprised to hear one day of their starting in a *new race of revolutions* !

“ Believe me

“ Always your obliged and affectionate

“ DANIEL O'CONNELL.

“ What a treat an Irish newspaper would be to me !”

CHAPTER IV.

PREMATURE SESSION OF PARLIAMENT.—THE IRISH TORIES.—LORD DE GREY.—REFORMED CORPORATION OF DUBLIN—ITS FIRST LORD MAYOR.—MUNICIPAL REFORM ACT.—MR. GROTE.—THE NEW BALLOT-BOX.—VOTE BY BALLOT.—MR. O'CONNELL TAKES POSSESSION OF THE MANSION-HOUSE IN DUBLIN.—DIFFICULTIES HE HAD TO ENCOUNTER.—CORPORATION ADDRESS TO HER MAJESTY—ITS PRESENTATION.—DINNER AT THE LONDON TAVERN.—SIR ROBERT PEEL—HIS SPEECH ON THE DISTRESS OF THE COUNTRY.—MEETING AT THE REFORM CLUB.—THE CORN LAWS.—M. SOYER'S DINNERS.—THE HIGH SHERIFF OF FERMANAGH.—BRIBERY AND INTIMIDATION.—MR. ROEBUCK.—PEEL'S FINANCIAL PLANS.—CUSTOMS TARIFF.—STATE OF PARTIES.—FRANCIS FIRES AT THE QUEEN.—ANOTHER ATTEMPT.—THE POT-HOUSE PLOT.

LITTLE was done in the short first session of the newly elected Parliament of 1841, save the easy task of turning out the already doomed Whig Ministry. It was with the inauguration of this Parliament that, very appropriately on account of its Toryism, and very happily on all accounts, we ceased to be afflicted with the constant repetition of the *phrases banales* for the previous nine years constantly recurring in debate, viz. “this *re-*

formed Parliament," and "*now that we all have constituents.*"

This first session, or first *instalment* of a session, began in September, and lasted about two months. Of all the devices that ever have been brought into action for man's annoyance, that of a premature session of Parliament is far and away the most irritating, troublesome, and useless. It never advances the real work of the ordinary session one inch,—it never tends to shorten that ordinary session by a single day. Nay, the experienced in those matters, especially those most respectable *laudatores temporis acti*, the older officers of the House, do not hesitate to affirm, that a session before Christmas makes the subsequent session even longer than it would otherwise be, instead of helping to "*cut it short.*" And there is nothing very paradoxical in the assertion, to those at least who know how hard it is to get members to give up entirely their winter amusements in the country, and persuade them not to take revenge for the unusual duties before Christmas, by at least a corresponding period of inattention and absence afterwards.

The Irish Tories made a wonderful display in

order to *spite* the unfortunate *Papists*, when Sir Robert Peel's Government were firmly seated in office in 1841, and a Lord Lieutenant sent over who was supposed to be *true-blue*. Every old family coach, antiquated landau, chaise, and car-riole of high or low degree, was dragged lumbering out of the receptacles where they had slumbered for years, and sent up to Dublin by easy and safe stages, there to furnish out the grand inaugural procession of the representative of A TRULY PROTESTANT GOVERNMENT. For a wide radius around the city of Dublin, the posting-houses were left without horses on the days of the first levee and drawing-room of the new Vice-Regal luminaries; and poor raw-boned and skinny post-cattle became for the nonce—at least in the columns of the Dublin Tory journals—the “splendid carriage-horses” of the aristocracy of the land, who had assembled in Dublin to pay honour to the Conservative Lord Lieutenant.

Lord De Grey did not seem by any means so impressed with the magnitude and importance of the tribute thus rendered to him, as were the Dublin Mail and Packet, &c. &c. A very short experience told his visitors that he was too fond

of a quiet life to be over-anxious to see them often. Not that he had the least objection in the world to oblige them with a little bit of bigotry, and give them a small party-triumph by the appointment of some inveterate, narrow-minded, and bitter enemy of the Catholics. *That* he was quite ready to do, it being merely at the expense of the country. What involved his own expense was a different matter, if all tales be true, especially that of the celebrated "leg of beef," which the Dublin Mendicity Society accepted in lieu of, and as a composition for, the annual Vice-Regal tribute of an ox. In a country addicted to hospitality and to *joking*, this offering was an unfortunate mistake of his Conservative Excellency.

The effect on the Repeal Agitation of the advent to power of a Tory Government, was certainly beneficial. One immediate good effect, of no small importance, began without delay to show itself. The miserable suspicion of each other, which a long experience of oppression and betrayal has unfortunately generated among Irishmen, was checked by the evident impossibility of fixing an accusation upon men marked out for exclusion from office by the brand of their religion,

even more than by that of their known "Repeal" sentiments. A greater degree of unanimity, therefore, and a much warmer feeling of cordiality, began to be apparent amongst us, and the accessions to the Repeal Association gradually and steadily increased.

It was in the month of November of this year that the new or "Reformed" Corporation of Dublin came into office, my father being their first Lord Mayor. The excitement amongst the poor people was extraordinary. To have lived to witness the downfall of the old virulent *Orange* Corporation of Dublin, and the installation in its place of a body composed of Catholics and Liberal Protestants, appeared to the more aged of the popular party almost as a kind of pleasant vision, instead of a comfortable reality; while the young looked upon this success as the bright dawning of a new era, in the triumphs and advantages of which they would be largely partakers.

The annoyance, mortification, and irritation on the parts of the adherents and *sympathizers* of the old Corporation was proportionately great; as were also their expectations of further discomfiture and deprivation.

Both the one and the other party much miscalculated. Toryism was not so easily beaten. Like the Yankee in the Indian bush-fight, it was "not half dead yet." The old policy of obstructing and neutralizing the benefits of concession, which had been and is to this day pursued by English statesmen with reference to the measure of Catholic Emancipation, was directed against the working out of the Liberal amendment now made in the municipal institutions of Ireland. And we see its results to-day in the protracted refusal to correct the defects which haste or ill-will occasioned in our Corporation Reform Act; and in the increasing peril and persecution which is allowed to gather around the new bodies, without any effort on the part of the fair-promising Liberal statesmen of England so to improve their own work, as to enable it to resist the attacks accumulating against it.

A session has passed since the foregoing words were written; and although Bills styled *Amendments* of the Irish Municipal Law have passed *for Dublin*, we cannot acquiesce in so styling them, till experience shall have tested whether they are not delusions and frauds.

The spirit in which the Upper House legislated for Ireland in the case of this measure, as well as in that of the first Irish Poor-law, was not calculated to add much to the fame of that body. The Irish Poor-law ran a very great risk in the Lords, and its English advocates and supporters in that House might not have succeeded in mitigating the fierce opposition of their Irish colleagues, had not the lure been held out to the latter, that one operation of the new law would be indirectly, but gradually and certainly, to *check and curtail the popular franchise*.

In the case of the Municipal Reform Act for Ireland, the expectation was openly expressed and avowed, that the little dignities and offices which it would place within reach of the hitherto excluded *agitators* of the smaller class, would become a fruitful source of contention, jealousies, and *divisions* in the popular ranks, and so weaken the popular strength. And the new Municipal Act Amendment Bills have been made law in such haste, and with such suspicious support from the enemies of the people, that there can scarce be a doubt of its being hoped to turn them against the rights of the latter, by means of the power and

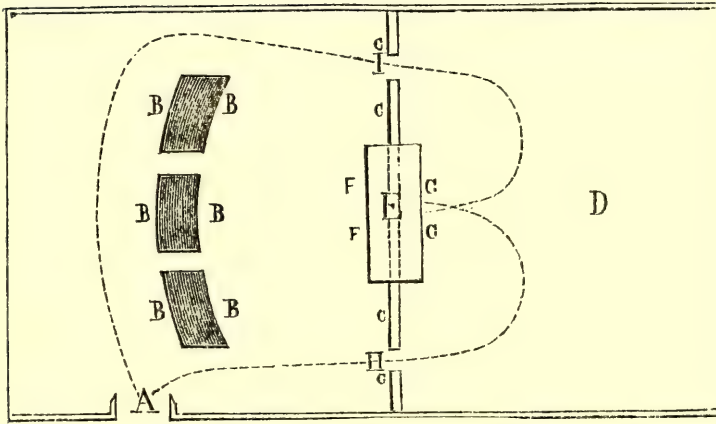
influence put into the hands of the Lord Lieutenant.

Even at the outset this expectation was partly realized, though (infinitely to the credit of the parties whose interests and small ambitions were expected to conflict) not to the extent that was anticipated. A variety of candidates started for each post and seat in the new Town Council of Dublin, and the hitherto unanimous "agitators" split up into sections and cliques, each labouring hard to return some favourite of their own. My father proposed, and with some of the wards secured, the adoption of an expedient of some general as well as particular interest, to determine the choice of the various constituencies before proceeding to the poll. Mr. Grote, late M.P. for one of the electoral districts of London, had forwarded to him some time previously two models, large and small, of a *Ballot-box*—the invention, I believe, of Mr. Grote himself—applicable to the purpose of taking the votes of a large constituency on the principle of secret ballot.

Mr. O'Connell, following closely the directions which had accompanied the box, had, some time previously to the Dublin Municipal struggle,

caused it to be fitted up in one of the Committee Rooms of the Corn Exchange; a bulk-head being run across the room for the purpose, and the box inserted in the middle of it; while at either side of the box were doors, one of which was to admit the voter into the small inside room formed by the bulk-head, and the other to give him egress when he should have voted. The judges or inspectors of the ballot were to take their places in the outside compartment into which the room was divided by the bulk-head, and they had one face of the ballot-box, together with the front of the well-padlocked chest into which the voters' cards were to fall, turned towards them. The other face of the ballot-box looked into the little compartment inside, into which the voter was to go, and through which he was to pass after marking his card in the manner in which I shall presently attempt to describe.

To render the description more readily intelligible, it may be well to trace a small plan, to which reference can be made. The following, then, was the disposition of the apartment: the Roman letters indicating the points requiring to be particularly noticed.



REFERENCE TO THE ABOVE.*

- A. Entrance door to the room.
- B. Seats of the Inspectors of Votes, &c.
- C. c. The Bulk-head or partition, across the room; reaching from the floor to the ceiling, and from side to side.
- D. The inner room, or compartment, into which the voter was to go, and where his motions and actions could not be seen from the outside.
- E. The Ballot-box "let in," or inserted into the partition.
- F. and G. are the two faces of the box; one presented to the Inspectors in the outer compartment, the other seen only by the voter inside.
- H. and I. are the doors in the partition; the first for the voter's entrance, the second for his egress.

* Just when writing this description, I have seen (March, 1849,) the advertisement in the Dublin papers of this Box for sale, along with all the other furniture and fixtures of our bankrupt Association.

The voter—his identity, &c. being elsewhere established—is supposed to enter at *A*, and to proceed according to the dotted line in the plan, through the door *H*, which shuts after him with a spring, into the inner compartment *D*. There he approaches the side *G G* of the ballot-box (*E*), and sees, in a species of frame at the top of the box, a card with the names of the respective candidates printed upon it. A species of gimlet hangs near the frame, and he has been instructed outside, (upon a small model kept in the outer room for the purpose,) that he is to indicate his choice by punching with the gimlet the card before him, in a line with the name of his favourite. Holes are made in the frame in a line with each name, to enable him to introduce the gimlet for the foregoing purpose. He then withdraws and drops the gimlet; and if he choose *himself* to make the card he has thus marked drop into the padlocked chest under the ballot-box, he has only to press a small brass knob, as he has been shown to do in the model outside, and the card drops safely and promptly into its appointed receptacle. He then leaves the inner compartment *D* by the door *I*, which only opens *outward*, and

closes after him with a spring; and he goes his way.

Meantime, neither the inspectors outside, nor any one else, have any means of knowing what name he has chosen to mark. The voter has been alone, and completely concealed by the bulk-head or partition. All that the inspectors see is the white and unmarked *back* of *that portion* of the card on the other side of which the names, to them invisible, of course, are printed. The frame in which the card stands is glazed on their side, and is much smaller than inside; so small as entirely to conceal that portion of the card which the voter punctures with the gimlet. If, after he has done so, he has not pressed the brass knob inside, which makes the card descend, but comes out and goes away while the card is still there, a corresponding brass knob on the outside gives the inspectors the means of causing it to fall down into the chest below; still, however, without their having the least opportunity of detecting the mark that the voter made. When the card has fallen, the frame and glass of course appear vacant; and the inspectors, through a groove in the top of the frame, insert a new card, with its back, like the former

one, turned towards themselves; and its front, with the candidates' names printed on it, turned towards the inner compartment, ready for the next voter. The latter is not introduced until the change has been thus made.

To any one who may have taken the trouble of going through this description, and of looking at the little plan to which reference is made, it must be evident that the secrecy is complete; and the process quite simple enough to be comprehended, at least after a short previous instruction on the small model outside, by the most ordinary capacity. Of course the agents of the various candidates would take especial care to see that their voters understood the process; however little chance they had of knowing ultimately the disposition of each vote.

In this way, upon the occasion I have mentioned, the votes of some thousands of burgesses of the city of Dublin were taken with an ease, regularity, and absence of disturbance and interruption very unusual in conducting such operations according to the ordinary process. Mr. O'Connell, with that earnestness of interest that he threw into every matter that he took up, whether of

great or small importance, sat in the outer room the whole day, superintending, directing, counselling, and watching; and personally assisted in counting the cards, when at the close of the day the three appointed inspectors unlocked each the padlock he had himself placed upon the chest under the ballot-box into which the cards had fallen, and proceeded to examine the result of the voting. The following sketch will show the arrangement of the front of the card; that which was presented to the voter when inside the partition.

<i>B</i>	MC KENNA.	<i>C</i>
<i>B</i>	GRACE.	<i>C</i>
<i>B</i>	MC LAUGHLIN.	<i>C</i>
<i>B</i>	MURPHY.	<i>C</i>

A A A A The frame.

B B B B The candidates' names.

C C C C The additional slip of the frame, through which a hole was made opposite each candidate's name. Through one of these holes—that opposite his favourite's name—the voter passed the point of the gimlet; piercing the card within in the manner described in a previous page.

If any card was found to have been pierced oppositemorenames than there were representatives to be chosen—as, for instance, if in wards where two persons were to be designated for support, *three* names had been marked, and where one was to be designated, *two* names were marked—such card was considered of no effect, and was accordingly thrown out of the count. The phrase “designated for support” will recall to the reader’s recollection, that this voluntary ballot at the Corn Exchange was but a preliminary measure to the legal election for seats in the new town-council or corporation of Dublin, and was but a means of settling disputes among the Liberals as to the particular individual or individuals who should receive general support at that election, by mutual consent and agreement among the various sections into which the Liberal or popular party had been split.

The secrecy then of the ballot was found complete; the facility and rapidity of taking the votes complete; the opportunity also complete for each voter to act according to his own will and private inclinations, without being subject to any extraneous influence; and finally, and as a necessary

consequence of the success of the steps in the points just enumerated, the result of the ballot gave complete satisfaction, and restored a unity of action to the councils of the popular party in the approaching struggle. Of course there were some few *malcontents* and *mutineers*, as will always occur among bodies of men, large or small, seeking to come to a common decision and purpose. These worthies broke off from their agreement, and voted according to their previous fancy, or to the fancy of the moment; but the vast majority of those who had taken part in the ballot-experiment remained true to their engagements, and the consequence was, that in the wards whose electors and candidates had submitted to this ordeal the Tory enemy was easily and thoroughly beaten.

For nearly two months after his election as Lord Mayor, my father could not be prevailed upon to leave his comfortable house in Merrion-square, and go to the Mansion-house. The latter, a building of the time of William the Third, or Queen Anne, has some good rooms on the ground floor, but very defective accommodation for a family upstairs, as well as for unfortunate servants.

The Dublin Orangemen were sorely disappointed when he at last overcame his reluctance, and entered its precincts. They had hoped that that sacred citadel of sectarian and political ascendancy would never

“ By *papist* feet be trod ;”

and the idea of having an O’Connell living where true-blue and *no surrender* Lord Mayors had so long reigned, and where a Gifford, a Duigenan, and other *were-wolves* of fierce and vulgar bigotry had resorted, was to them intolerable ; but *they little knew*, poor men, to what audacious length Popish audacity and profanity would go. Presently a horrid whisper ran through all Orange-land, then grew into a hoarse murmur, and finally burst out in a shout of indignant astonishment and execration. The fact, the appalling fact became known, that the Papist intruder, Daniel O’Connell, had dared to outrage the sacred memories of the domicile he had invaded, and the shades of Orange heroes that were said to flit through the dusty and comfortless passages of the rooms of the Mansion-house, revisiting the glimpses of the moon, by causing Catholic prayers to be offered up by a real live Catholic or

Popish priest, upon one Sunday, when he was unable to go out to chapel.

After such conduct it was impossible to say where the audacity of the Papists would stop! The establishment of the Inquisition itself, in the large banqueting-room behind the Mansion-house, which had been erected for the purpose of entertaining that truly Protestant monarch George the Fourth when he visited his Irish dominions, was by no means improbable as the next proceeding.

Without unduly speaking of one with whom my connexion was so close, it may be allowable that I should say that, but for Mr. O'Connell's legal knowledge, personal superintendence, advice and exertions, *physical* as well as moral, it would have been utterly impossible to have got the new Corporation to work; such were the designedly intricate and difficult provisions of the Act under which it was constituted, and the entire inexperience in such matters, and confusion of counsels, among the liberal constituency of the city of Dublin.

That the reader may judge of one form of these difficulties, it will be permitted to state

that no less than 8,000*l.* was the expenditure rendered inevitably necessary in constituting the machinery for the elections, and bringing the Corporation into working order; and all this expense was official, and entirely irrespective of the personal disbursements of the candidates. The new Corporation, therefore, was not only saddled with the ancient debts and encumbrances contracted by the reckless and characterless partisans whom they succeeded, but were *inevitably* compelled, by the minute and multitudinous provisions and requirements of the Act, to incur at their outset an additional burthen, to the amount before mentioned.

Having at last got the body fairly on its legs, and having discharged all the duties, conventional as well as legal, that a Lord Mayor has at his first entrance into office to perform—such as entertaining, presiding at meetings, attending charity sermons, and, above all, the important point of giving subscriptions, contributions, &c. to all manner of public objects and institutions—Mr. O'Connell set out late in February, 1842, to attend Parliament.

One duty of his new office he had to discharge

in full paraphernalia of state, a short time after arriving in London. The Corporation of Dublin had agreed to an address, congratulating her Majesty upon her then recent marriage with Prince Albert; and they had claimed their right, "and had their claim allowed," to present it by a deputation of their own number, to her Majesty in person. Accordingly, two of the aldermen and two of the common councillors, representing respectively the two classes of corporators, accompanied by the Town Clerk, Sword and Mace-bearers, Marshal and High Constable of the body, *rendezvoused* at my father's hotel in London on the appointed day, all *en grande tenue*, for the purpose of attending him when presenting the address. Some three or four Irish M.P.s and one or two burgesses of Dublin, who happened to be in town at the moment, added to the *tail*: and away we went through Pall Mall, with many a jeer from the passers-by at the modest and *mitigated* display of gingerbread on the equipages and appointments of "the shabby *Irish* Corporation."

We were kept waiting below for a short time, and then marshalled in state up the great staircase of Buckingham Palace: the Corporation officers

going first, and then the Lord Mayor and his chaplain. The latter, a most respectable and deservedly respected old clergyman, now some years dead, gave some amusement just at this important moment, by a display of one of the little harmless peculiarities for which he was noted in laughter-loving Dublin. The oldest *curate*, not only in Dublin, but perhaps in *Ireland*—having been in that subordinate rank for nearly fifty years, during the greater part of which lengthened period he had remained in it *voluntarily*, refusing several parishes which had been successively offered to him,—he yet had from the Court of Rome the honorary title and dignity of a *Monsignore*, part of the outward and visible signs of which honorary office are a short mantle of black silk, worn on the shoulders, and a neck-cloth, stockings, and gloves of prelatical purple. Both stockings and gloves in his case bore testimony, by many a *darn* and many a discoloration, to the habits of a most rigid economy, which he had practised through life for the most laudable and unvarying purpose of dedicating the savings of his small stipend to erecting “free foundations” or *burses* for ecclesiastical students in

Maynooth, and, I believe, the Irish Ecclesiastical College at Rome. One of these gloves, marked by many a token of his honourable and apostolical poverty, he now held up to the fastidious eyes of a gold-bedizened and perfumed official of the Palace, and said, in his own homely, fatherly way,—

“ *My dear*, I left the fellow of this glove in the parlour below. Will you look for it for me, while we are upstairs? and the Lord bless you!”

“ Certainly, Sir, certainly; I shall be sure to have it for you as you come down;” was the civil and very proper reply; and the assurance was most punctually redeemed.

After due marshalling in the ante-chamber, the double doors into the throne-room were opened, and in we went to the royal presence. Had the fates spared Lord Eldon to witness that day and that scene, how his inmost soul would have been shocked to see Irish Papists, clad in the despoiled trophies of the Protestant Corporation of Dublin, marching up in solemn state to the crowned representative of the Protestant House of Brunswick, to speak with her face to face! And how would not

“ On Horror’s head horrors accumulate,”

could he have heard her Majesty, in her own singularly clear, pleasing, and silver-toned enunciation, express her gracious acknowledgment of the respectful congratulations of the “mere Irish”—and worse than that, the *Papist* Irish!

A dinner at the London Tavern, conducted on the *Reformed-corporation* principles, viz. charges as *moderate* at least as the *London Tavern* would undertake for, and charges paid out of PRIVATE pockets instead of out of corporation property, closed merrily the proceedings of the day.

Having about this period commenced a kind of very irregular journal of passing occurrences of interest in the political world, I transcribe, without alteration or emendation, from it a few notices, jotted down from time to time according to impressions of the moment, of some of the events of the parliamentary session of 1842.

“*Thursday, Feb. 10, 1842.*—Last night Peel at length prescribed (to use his own medical simile) for the distress of these countries. There was of course great anxiety to hear his plans, and consequently a very full house. The Anti-Corn-law delegates marched down full six hundred strong, it

is said, but could not get admission. At a little after five Peel rose, and there was instantly, and throughout his speech, the deepest attention.

“ For two hours and a half did he speak, and in all that time no one enlarged view, no one statesman-like sentiment! To be sure, his cause was bad, and he was restrained and fettered by his party; but so much the more disgrace to him. He confessed the existence of distress, which he had denied last August; but he said that Corn-laws had nothing to do with it; that is, that restrictions on the importation of food, and consequent high prices of food, to the poor man, are no real evil to him; and that the loss and ruin now falling heavily upon the manufacturers, are in no way caused by the retaliation of foreigners in shutting their markets against British manufactures in return for the exclusion of their agricultural produce from British ports! He attributed the distress to, first, the war with China, which interferes with our trade thither! second, to over speculation; third, to *improvements in machinery*; fourth, to the derangement of intercourse with America, from her monetary confusion (omitting the exceeding likelihood that if America could

have sent her corn, she would have paid much of her debts); fifth, to the dispensation of Providence! &c. &c.

“ He then combated, or addressed himself to combat, the total repealers and the fixed-duty men. To the first he brought up the old bugbear of dependence upon foreigners, and to the second he said, that their fixed duty would be useless when corn was low, and cruel when corn was high—asserting, and merely *asserting*, that it would not prevent fluctuations as great as at present! He also argued generally against the idea that cheap bread makes the comfort of a people; contrasting Prussia, &c., with England; bread being cheaper in the former than the latter, and yet a greater average consumption of bread, meat, sugar, &c., per head among the people of the latter country than those of the former,—as if that were any reason for not giving bread as cheap to the English!

“ He then came to his plan. First, &c. &c.

* * * * *

“ This is an insult, as Cobden truly called it last night. It leaves all the restriction and the grinding pressure of the Corn-laws, while it is put forward as a measure of relief; and the insult is

aggravated by the shallow trick of the Duke of Buckingham's resignation of office.

“Of course the other measures of this Government, where they pretend relief, will be equally delusive; but there is little doubt their measures towards poor Ireland will be of an efficient character—efficient in evil and tyranny.

“As yet, indeed, notwithstanding the powerful and reckless majority against Ireland, there is none of the bitterness of hostility breaking out openly that used to be manifested while the party were in opposition. But this present forbearance is all to spread a thin veil of moderation over their intentions, until their preparations for action are made; and then *væ victis*! Ireland shall pay for her long opposition to the Tory party.

“She has now for more than ten years returned a strong Liberal majority. Had she a Parliament of her own, what measures of benefit would she not have passed in that interval! She returned at this last election, despite of the most reckless intimidation and foul play, a Liberal majority. Had she a Parliament of her own, the Government would be Liberal in Ireland.

“4 P.M.—A meeting of the liberal M.P.s and late

M.P.s at the Reform Club, good feeling prevailing: rather a disposition on the part of the Whig section to conciliate the more popular portion of the party; but though I think this will improve, through the pressure of sheer necessity, I fear they would need more experience of adversity to make them act steadily in the true interest of the people.

“ On Monday, we have consented that an amendment should be moved to the Speaker’s leaving the chair for the Corn-laws Committee, to this effect: ‘That no modification of the Corn-laws can be satisfactory that preserves the sliding scale.’ This motion enables us to vote all together;—when beaten on that, Villiers moves for *total Repeal*.

“ A symptom that the Whigs are verging towards *popularizing* themselves a little more, is the getting up of mixed dinners at the Reform Club once a-week, where we shall gradually get some knowledge of each other, and perhaps some little mutual asperities may be softened down.

“ The establishment of the Tories in power is of course a blow to the Whigs, and a heavy discouragement to the English Radicals; but what

do they suffer from it, comparable with what we Irish are suffering, and must prepare ourselves to suffer! The bench is being recruited with unscrupulous partisans, promoted for their partisanship; and in all cases touching political rights and political liberty, they will decide for their party. The jury-box is shut to fairness and honesty, for the sheriffs are *of the right sort*. Again, Tories dismissed for misconduct have been restored to the bench, fresh Tories added in crowds, and an ill-feeling on the part of the Government towards the stipendiaries, *i. e.* the really responsible magistrates, is declared."

The speech of Sir Robert Peel commented upon in the first of the foregoing extracts, was one of the most tantalizing ever delivered in Parliament within the memory of that respectable and often-quoted personage, "the oldest inhabitant!" For two mortal hours did he go about his subject and about it, without ever coming to it; at least to that part of his subject which in the heated and fevered interest of the time was most looked for and waited for by his auditory, viz. his long rumoured and pompously heralded plan for the

amendment of the Corn-laws. Perhaps it is not at all an exaggeration to say, that full twenty different times, if not oftener, men bristled up, fixed themselves newly on their seats, uttered a short impatient “Hush!” to their equally anxious and impatient neighbours, and drew in their breaths hard between their teeth, with the ejaculation, “*Now* he comes to it!” as the Minister seemed at length to be winding up his protracted exordium, and approaching the desired exposition. But no! he had *not* come to it,—they were totally mistaken,—never more mistaken in their lives! Up suddenly got a new hare, and away went Sir Robert Peel at a tangent in full chase of it, and coursed it through all its doubles with most exemplary industry and activity, while the assembled members

“Conticuere omnes, intentique ora tenebant,”

aghast and blank with disappointment after disappointment.

This could not, however, last for ever. All human miseries, as well as human joys, are finite; and the general law prevailed *even* with this speech. Out came, sharp, distinct, and brief enough, when

at length it did come, the modification-proposal described in the foregoing extract.

It came in time for *post*, and little more than in time for post. Just one moment was given to draw a long breath of relieved expectation, another to interchange looks and comments of astonishment, dissatisfaction, or otherwise, and then "the school broke up," and members scurried away to our small inconvenient library, to the writing-room in the new lobby, to the smoking and nearest committee rooms, the vote office, waiting-room, and even the crowded *old* lobby, seizing on and occupying every square inch of surface that would give support to even half a sheet of note-paper, as they scribbled to friends, constituents, and others, the chief points of the new *thimble-rig* attempted with the Corn-laws.

The prominent symptom was *dissatisfaction*. The Corn-law advocates were vexed their favourite legislation should be meddled or tampered with, at all. The waverers and *half-measure* men did not like *this* half-measure, if it could be called *even* a *half-measure*. And we may remark in passing, that there is none so intolerant of the modifications and half-measures of others, as your professed

modification and half-measure man himself. He is ever sure to have, or at the least to fancy himself to have, some nice little pet expedient of his own, calculated, according to his opinion, to do wonders, if the prejudices and prepossessions of others would only yield him the opportunity of making a trial. In short, according to the *very* old and thread-bare quotation, he freely

“Compounds for *shifts* he is inclined to,
By damning those he has no mind to.”

As to the Corn-law abolitionists—the Tee-total men, they of course saw through Sir Robert Peel’s speech at once, and detected all its hollowness and insufficiency; but there was balm in Gilead in the reflection, that “the Corn-laws were assuredly *doomed*,” since Peel, borne into power on the shoulders of their most uncompromising and fiercest advocates, began his term of office with a disturbance, under the name of a modification, of those laws. From this and other symptoms of divided and wavering counsels among the monopolist party, auguries of good hope and fresh encouragement to “Agitation” were plainly to be deduced.

The House dinners mentioned in the second extract as having taken place at the Reform Club, lasted some four or five weeks; and most pre-eminently stupid affairs they were, in so far as regarded—

“ The feast of reason and the flow of soul.”

Very excellent dinners, most undoubtedly, *as dinners*; doing abundant credit to Monsieur Soyer's art and labours; he having condescended to put himself to trouble about them.

Beyond the opportunity thus given him for the display of his culinary talents, and the inconveniencies of crowded dinner-parties, made up of men scarcely acquainted with each other, and belonging to all the various shades, sections, and subdivisions of what was called the Liberal party, no other result followed this galvanized attempt at sociality.

Referring again to the extracts from my rough notes of passing events, feelings, opinions, &c., it is scarcely to be described, the gloom that was cast over the popular mind in Ireland by the installation into office of the Conservative party; and the depression of the popular party was rivalled in intensity by the exultation of their

opponents, who fairly “stopped at nothing” in the first exuberance of their rejoicings.

The high-sheriff of the county Fermanagh, when proceeding, according to the old custom, to meet the Judges of Assize, bedecked his servants and attendants in *orange and blue*—the colours of the ascendancy and exclusion party in Ireland, while they are the colours of the *Liberal* party at English elections. The Judges most properly, and with becoming dignity, refused to enter his carriage, when they had noticed this display. It was said afterwards, that the colours in question were really those of his livery, and not adopted for the occasion. But the conduct of the Judges was considered to have done them infinite credit under all and *under any* circumstances.

The same worthy, when sealing the returns to be sent up to Dublin with the names of the two Knights of the Shire chosen at the general election of 1841, did so with a large seal, on which was printed in conspicuous letters the following elegant aspiration—being one of the standard toasts of Orange orgies:—

“ *The Pope in the Pillory, in Hell,
Pelted with Priests by the Devil!* ”

and an exceedingly well cut device was encircled by the inscription, representing the bearer of the triple tiara at a stake amid flames; while a respectable gentleman with horns, hoofs, and a long curly tail was taking dead aim at him with a poor priest brandished high in the air over his head.

These disgraceful absurdities were as the straws upon the stream, denoting the strength and direction of the dark and bitter current below. I will not go further into this disagreeable subject than to say that the concluding part of the extract referred to, does not upon recollection now, as it did not when I wrote it, appear to have any exaggeration about it. The poor *stipendiaries* there mentioned were particularly obnoxious to the little local despots among the unpaid magistracy, where they refused to join cause with the latter; and four or five of them were at once dismissed, not for any assigned or assignable fault, but under the pretence that they were unnecessary; and such hard measure dealt out to them, that they were required to start off at once, home by the *nearest and shortest route*, otherwise they were not to get the scant and limited *viaticum* to be

allowed to the more promptly obedient. This order was indeed relaxed shortly after, but only under the pressure of the general feeling of indignation which it had excited.

Meantime your Whigs, good easy men, were congratulating and complimenting Sir Robert Peel across the table of the House of Commons, upon the fairness and liberality of his government in Ireland; and Sir Robert, looking virtue itself, sat with meek and sober stateliness upon the Treasury bench, listening to and accepting all the glorification they chose to give him, as complacent and self-contented as Sir Charles Grandison himself.

The Parliament returned at the general election of the year 1841, was declared upon all hands, and with most edifying unanimity, to have been returned by the most enormous amount of bribery that had ever been known, even in England. There was a Parliament of one of the Edwards, or the Henrys, which is stigmatized in the legislative annals of the country as the *ignorant Parliament*—*Parliamentum indoctum*—an epithet which is said to have been earned for it by the pre-eminent want of knowledge and intelligence of those who were returned to serve in it. The

Parliament of 1841 should have taken place in English records as "*Parliamentum impure*:" the Parliament sprung from the grossest and vilest corruption, the grossest "treating," and the most flagrant intimidation.

Not less than two millions and a half was the *lowest* estimate of the total of expenditure of both parties, Whig and Conservative, at this crisis of their contest. And both were said to be for the time thoroughly "*cleaned out*," in consequence of it.

Intimidation, too, was plentifully used chiefly on the unfortunate 50% voters in the English counties, under the "Chandos" clause of the Reform Bill. And since the days of the consular elections at Rome there had never been seen such wholesale *feeding* of voters; and in all the days of England's electioneering history, never such mighty *drinking*--such potentswilling of ale, gin, and beer,—at the expense, of course, of the plundered candidates; to whom, by a most just retribution, quite as little mercy was shown as they deserved. They had gone with their eyes (and *purses*) open into the discreditable conflict, and no one could regret that they suffered heavily for it, much as

the corruption of the instruments of their chastisement was to be detested and denounced. Roebuck—then, and until the last general election, member for Bath—had a fine field in the transgressions of these parties for the exercise of his peculiar fancy and talent for picking holes in his neighbours' coats. And he *did use* his opportunity most unmercifully.

Few men possess in so striking a degree, the dangerous and unhappy gift of sarcastic powers, as Mr. Roebuck. It is a dangerous and unhappy gift to its possessor, as it robs him of friends, while it procures for him plenty of applauders and backers at the moment: each man being glad to have the lash directed against his neighbours, and averted from himself. The effect of Mr. Roebuck's other talents—and they are not in small measure either as to quantity or quality—is grievously marred by this propensity to bitterness, and the likelihood of his ever attaining the position of a political leader rendered almost naught. Men like to be led, indeed, and it is said of political parties, at least in this country, that they do not object to having what sailors call a “*taut hand*” kept over them; or if they grumble,

still are found to submit to it far better than they would to a guidance attempted in milder, and more considerate fashion. But no man likes to be perpetually in hot water; and no man likes to be the butt of his leader's sarcasms: and whoever follows John Arthur Roebuck must make up his mind to both contingencies; for that gentleman is never—— I will not say *contented*, for content and he have nothing in common—but is never in his glory, save when over the shoulders, and nearly over head, in the *hottest* water; and when he has not an opponent to assail, will turn his fine-edged and glittering steel upon a friend.

Mr. Roebuck's person, as well as manner and delivery, are well known; the former small and spare, but well formed; the head highly intellectual, but the countenance telling tales of the acrimony within. His voice is harsh, but clear; and his delivery a little too sharp and dogmatic to be altogether pleasing; while at the same time it is undoubtedly impressive and telling.

I had jotted down the following notice of his performances on the occasion of the bribery disclosures and confessions of the "*Parliamentum impure*" of 1841.

“*Monday, May 9, 1842.*—A strange and novel scene in the House of Commons last night of meeting (Friday). Roebuck, M.P. for Bath, got up according to notice, and put questions to several members, whom he accused, from common report, of having been parties in various compromises that are said to have lately taken place with regard to election-petitions—as in the case of Nottingham borough, where the Whig member, after having been declared by the Committee to have been ‘duly elected,’ has vacated his seat to leave an opening for ‘the last rose [of summer],’—Walter of the Times; and other cases.

“Roebuck’s proceeding seemed to take the House completely by surprise. It was of a totally unprecedented and unexpected character. The members to whom he had put questions gave various answers; generally, however, declining to give him any information on the subject. The Tories and Sir John Hobhouse, (M.P. for Nottingham, and who is, unfortunately, scarcely to be excepted when Tories are spoken of,) refused the gentle request with high indignation, and great violence of bearing. Two Whigs, or Whig-

Radicals, confessed there had been bribery at their respective elections, but declared that they had nothing whatever to do with it, nor any cognisance of it at the time; and the most Whiggish of the pair made the further confession, that there had been a compromise entered into whereby he was to resign his seat in a certain time in favour of a Tory.

But he added, that he had not known any thing of it at the time, nor until it was *entirely arranged*; and that he did not at all like it." The House thoroughly believed this latter assertion; at the same time that there was no reason to discredit the former, the fact being well known that he had been put in by Lord ——, altogether at the noble lord's expense.

"A good deal of discussion followed that evening, with much inclination shown on the Whig as well as Tory side to *burke* the matter; but Roebuck, for once in his life, shows *judgment* as well as talent and boldness, and seems likely to drive them to the wall. The debate stands adjourned to this night or to-morrow."

Notwithstanding the Peachum and Lockit agreement of Whig and Tory, Roebuck succeeded in

getting a Committee of Inquiry into these matters. The only tangible results were, that some compromises were voided, including the one of which its victim had declared his ignorance and his *disrelish* ; and that fresh and still more distinct evidence (and *confession*) than before was put on record, of the gross, disgusting, and shocking venality which stained a large proportion of the English returns to the “fourth *reformed* Parliament.”

“*Monday, March 14, 1842.*—On Friday, Peel brought forward his financial plans. An income tax for England, with all its vexatious inquisitions and annoyance. The wealthy middle classes, who voted for the Tories, will now suffer for their hostility to liberal principles. A stamp tax, or increase of the existing tax, and an increase on spirits, for Ireland, as an equivalent ; she being unable to bear an income tax.

* * * * *

“Sir R. Peel took about three and a half hours in making his speech ; beginning with a shorter string of schoolboy sentences than usual, and then going through details with great clearness certainly—but still *laboured clearness*. At the

end he lapsed into *schoolboyism* again: mouthing and delivering *ore rotundo* long sentences “signifying nothing,” or little else than nothing.

“If a ‘new member,’ or even an *old* one not of high rank or position, were to declaim in the way that he sometimes does, the offender would be very speedily and very *mercilessly* coughed down.

“*Monday, May 23, 1842.*—It is amusing to note the preparations for opposition to Sir Robert Peel’s proposed changes in the Customs Tariff. Each and every interest affected, or thinking itself likely to be affected, denounces the change in *its own case*, but can see *no objection* to its being tried in the case of *others*. Meantime Peel is going on—secure of his majority, varying indeed in its composition, but still *certain*: as Tories support him in the defective parts of his measures, and Liberals in the better parts.

“*Growlings* there are, however, in plenty at Sir Robert Peel, from quarters whence he drew his greatest strength; and very valorous declarations, somewhat to the tune of

“ ‘If ’twere to do *again*—but ’tis no matter!’

“All *moonshine*! They would support him again slavishly, were a dissolution to occur.

“It is hard to say when that may be, and when a change in affairs may come about. There is little of energy amongst the Liberal party, a considerable deal of mutual and miserable jealousy, and no *union* at all. The high Whigs want to advance as little as possible; the Chartists want to go very much too far and too fast; the intermediate Liberals are disputing the value and comparing the measure of their respective *crotchets*; and no two sections, out of the many into which they are split, agree with each other, or seem to have *any tolerance for* each other. Meantime that great body in the community, on whom the real hopes of England ought to have a resting-place,—THE PEOPLE, properly so called; *what* are *they* in England? *Slaves*—perfect and entire slaves! They have amongst them no principle of union, no great principle of action, no high objects implanted in their minds, no virtuous and self-sacrificing efforts at elections and other moments of trial; on the contrary, a sad and most deplorable readiness to accept bribes—a depraved exultation in having votes to sell. The bribery and corruption of the late elections in England, is now, by the press, the Parliament, and the public, con-

fessed and declared to have been the most flagrant that ever took place, *even in England*.

“ In fact, the House of Commons stands self-convicted and self-condemned; and we in Ireland, who have honestly and fairly returned a Liberal majority, are bound down and trampled upon by the representatives of bribery and corruption in England and Scotland. * * * *

“ *Tuesday, May 31, 1842.*—The poor little Queen *shot at* yesterday evening, being the *second* time! What a country!

“ The morning papers give scanty details, the inquiry being, as yet, kept secret. All that is known is, that he is one John Francis, a young carpenter, and that he fired, or some say flashed a pistol at her, at much about the same spot where Oxford fired at her before—viz., Constitution-hill. He is in custody, and under examination. Thank God! she is safe, and uninjured, I believe, even by fright.

“ The Houses adjourned on hearing the news, and so Peel's Income-Tax was put off for its third reading to this day.

“ The Tariff is getting on through the House. Peel broaches the most *free-trade-ish* doctrines—

viz. that we should buy at the cheapest market, &c. &c., but cannot be got to apply them to the importation of foreign corn. His majority *grumble* away in and out of doors, and occasionally give a valiant kick; but it means nothing. Meantime, the way is being smoothed for the Whigs, when some lucky chance shall restore them to office. The great monopolies are shaken; the wedge has entered, although only a little way. Still, entered it *has*, and can ultimately be driven home.

* * * * *

“*Monday, July 4, 1842.*—Yesterday, *another* attempt to fire upon the Queen! A wretched little hunchback, of the same class of life as the two other scoundrels. The particulars of the investigation are not very accurately known. This third attempt naturally creates extreme excitement and indignation,—as it was only the evening before that the Queen had commuted the death-sentence of Francis to transportation.”

The total cessation of these infamous acts, after the offence had, by a short Bill passed hastily through both Houses by Sir Robert Peel, after the last attempt, been degraded from all the dig-

nity of treason to that of a felonious misdemeanour, punishable with bodily castigation, proved that they originated in a depraved passion for notoriety. It was the opinion of many, that had the first occurrence of the kind—the attempt of the potboy, Edward Oxford, in the year 1838 or 1839—not been so lightly treated as, for the party purpose of seeking to damage by ridicule the Whig ministry of the day, it had been by the Opposition, who laughed at the noise made about what they jeeringly called the “*Pot-house Plot*,” the vagabonds who imitated Oxford’s achievement would not have quite so confidently calculated upon impunity and a comfortable provision for life.

CHAPTER V.

COMMENCEMENT OF NEW EFFORTS.—PROVINCIAL REPEAL INSPECTORS.—
REPEAL-ERRAND IN THE NORTH.—MR. RAY—HIS LABOURS IN THE
REPEAL ASSOCIATION.—HIS MEMORANDUM.

THE jealous distrust and suspicion which centuries of misgovernment, betrayal and disappointment have ingrained into the minds of the Irish people, operated even in this, the second year of the revived agitation for the Repeal of the Union, to limit the extension of that agitation and restrain its efforts.

Mr. O'Connell determined upon trying a new plan, or a long *disused* one revived, for the purpose of stimulating, if possible, the agitation, during the autumn of 1842. He proposed to poor Tom Steele, to T. M. Ray, to O'Neill Daunt and to me, (we were his immediate *aides-de-camp*,) to go out each upon a separate mission to preach

up Repeal, and enrol members and “associates” from the remotest districts of the country, in the ranks of the Repeal Association.

It was arranged that O'Neill Daunt should undertake what might be called the “Home-circuit” of agitation, viz. Leinster; that Ray should lighten the labours of agitating in Munster, for my father; and that I should go to “the Land of the West,” viz. Connaught. We were respectively dubbed “Repeal Inspectors” of the provinces that were to be the scene of our labours; and, besides the vote of the Association giving us our titles and powers, and with true *political* gratitude thanking us beforehand for services we were *expected* to render, were furnished each with a small portmanteau, well stuffed with political tracts, reports, &c. &c., to be distributed in such quantities, and to such localities and parties, as, in our wisdom, we should think most likely to forward our Repeal Propagandism.

The northern province, Ulster, was left *out of count*. Thereat mightily did rejoice the Orange organs of opinion in that province; and much they laboured to impress upon England the

importance of propitiating and remunerating them by special favours, and by concessions to their hankerings after that ascendancy which, in 1829, had seemed likely to be taken from them. If there be disgrace in endeavouring to avoid what would endanger the shedding of human blood, then were we disgraced by not having attempted to enter Ulster. If it were shameful cowardice to dread the loss of many lives in sanguinary brawls, without an object and without possible result, save disaster of all kinds, then were we guilty of that cowardice.

Mr. O'Connell always held that nothing worse could possibly occur,—nothing more tending to impede, and, perhaps, utterly to ruin the cause of “Repeal,” than that its advocacy should be made the subject of violent contention, bloodshed, and loss of life. So strongly was he impressed with this feeling, that on many and repeated occasions he forebore from pushing the agitation into parishes, and on more than one occasion into *counties* of the *South* and *West* of Ireland, where men's minds were not prepared for it; or, at any rate, where there was anything like a large and respectable minority arrayed against it.

“I want to *unite* Irishmen for ‘Repeal,’” he was accustomed to say, upon such occasions, “and not to set them fighting about it.”

It is true, that at a later period of the same year, 1842, he did himself adventure into the northern province, upon a Repeal errand. But it was sorely against his will, as against his judgment and earnest counsel. He had put every means in motion to wean the too ardent Repealers of the north from their project of inviting him up among them; but they persisted, and at length became so irritated at his arguing the matter with them, that most reluctantly, and entirely against his better judgment, as well as against the spirit of the policy which had ruled his whole political life, he had to yield, and to consent to visit—

“The Douglas in his hall!”

How he went, and what occurred before and during his expedition, I shall presently have to speak of, in due course; and, meantime, return to the earlier “going forth” of his three, or, rather, of his two, immediate satellites; Tom Steele not having set out till much later, and

Daunt and I being the first that “went upon our way *agitating*.”

When the appointments I have mentioned, of the Provincial Repeal Inspectors, were made, Steele was held in reserve for the northern mission. Mr. Ray did not start upon his Munster course for two or three weeks after O'Neill Daunt and me.

Having alluded to T. M. Ray, I cannot avoid saying a few words as to his services and character, especially at this moment, when the distress of the country, and the unmerited distress in which he has himself been plunged, have united to deprive Ireland of a most faithful and singularly efficient public servant.

It was in 1830 that he first came under the notice of Mr. O'Connell, who, with that penetration and keen and almost intuitive appreciation of others that he possessed, at once saw that T. M. Ray was the man for his purposes. At that time the latter was only a “Deputy-assistant under-secretary,” or some such thing, to the “Dublin Trades Political Union;” but was, in fact, *the* worker, and most practically efficient man of that body, then of considerable importance and influ-

ence in the electioneering and “agitating” affairs of the Irish metropolis. He drew their reports; he finished off their resolutions; he suggested the devices, &c. of their trade banners; and he not only composed the matter and substance of their documents, but displayed powers of penmanship that might have established him comfortably in London as a “Professor of the mighty art of *calligraphy*,” had his ambition leaned that way. Some of the addresses to my father at this period are extraordinary specimens of perfection in this line, and fairly rival the finest and most decorated specimens of copper-plate printing.

When the intermediate associations—intermediate between the Catholic and the Repeal Association—which we have noted in a former chapter, began to be established, Mr. Ray was installed in a subordinate office, at first, to poor Edward Dwyer, the respected and admirable secretary of the old Association; and when that excellent officer and good man had to retire from loss of health and strength, Mr. Ray continued as assistant to two or three “*Honorary Secretaries*,” who got the *honour*, while he had the *labour* of the office. At length, in 1840, on the establishment of the

Loyal National Repeal Association, he was made in name, what he had long been in fact and in labours, *the* secretary, and, as it were, "*stage-manager*" of the agitation.

In this office, the amount of work that he personally performed, the extraordinary and unremitting vigilance and efficiency of his superintendence over others, and the singularly clear, orderly, and methodical arrangement of all the details of the establishment, from the correspondence with Mr. O'Connell when out of town, down to the purchase of a box of wafers, astonished every one who had the opportunity of judging of them. There was not an occurrence, no matter how trivial, or in what remote part of the country it took place, that had any connexion with Repeal, during the eight years and upwards that he was in the office of secretary, which he had not recorded in one way or other, and of which he could not furnish, almost at a moment's notice, all the information that could be desired. Cash-books, day-books, ledgers, account books of all sorts and sizes, letter-books, books of members, of associates, of collectors, of Repeal wardens, Repeal inspectors, &c.; books with the names, &c., of American contri-

butors, who, as citizens of a foreign state, could not be enrolled either as members, associates, or under any other designation as belonging to the Association; minute-books, *rough and clean*, of the general weekly meetings, and of the meetings, regular or irregular, of each and all the various Committees; books of record of principal transactions of the body; *scrap-books*, with the accounts of every meeting or other incident connected with "Repeal," cut from newspapers for years back, and pasted carefully in, in order of dates, with clear and accurate indexes to each volume; Repeal reports, tracts, speeches in pamphlet form, &c. &c.:—all these he attended to, and all these he had ready for inspection or reference at a moment's warning, and without the slightest confusion or delay.

The "staff" under him varied in strength according to the finances of the Association. At first some three or four, it gradually and necessarily became larger, until there were upon the books, in 1844 and 1845, some fifty or sixty individuals, all in full employment, all fully employed and imperatively required by the enormous mass of business the Association had in those years to transact, and all superintended vigilantly and

actively by Mr. Ray, in addition to the other duties of his office.

Having written to Mr. Ray to refresh my memory upon points connected with the details of the establishment over which he presided at the Corn Exchange, I have just received the following hasty notes, which, although it may be scarcely fair towards him to do so, I insert as I received them, believing that they will thus have more interest than otherwise :—

*Memorandum regarding the establishment and mode of conducting business of Repeal Association.—
Drawn up by T. M. Ray.*

SECTION I.—THE STAFF.

In Sept. 1841, the Repeal staff consisted of nine persons; salaries 7*l.* 10*s.* weekly.

The Registry staff, viz., that for the county and city of Dublin, twelve persons; the salaries 21*l.* 4*s.* weekly.

We were then establishing the Dublin Corporation under the new law, and had a staff for this, while it lasted, of forty-three persons, salaries 55*l.* to 60*l.* weekly,

N.B.—There was no other body but the Association to undertake the task of encountering and overcoming the innumerable difficulties designedly left in the way of the enfranchised burgesses of Dublin.

Sept. 1842.—Staff of the Association seven persons; salaries 6*l.* weekly.

Registry ten persons; salaries 17*l.* 15*s.*

1843.—The Registry “Staff” was from twelve to fifteen persons, being still the staff for the city and county registry; salaries about 20*l.*

The Association assisted at other registries in special cases, but had no *staff* for them.

The working of the Association had increased to forty-eight persons; salaries about 40*l.* in the total, varying from 10*s.* to 30*s.* each person, and some one or two at 2*l.*

The same rate continued *nearly* until the middle of 1846, some reductions being made in 1845.

The above is exclusive of my [*T. M. Ray's*] salary, 300*l.* a-year, at the beginning of 1843,—(I think it was 4*l.* a-week previous)—400*l.* in 1843—reduced in 1847—and June 24, 1848, all hands were discharged, and I was *solus*—March 1849, *gone* !

SECTION II.—MODE OF CONDUCTING BUSINESS.

The mode of conducting the business was as follows :—

Between eight and nine o'clock each morning I got from the post-office our letter-box, with the letters, &c., of the day's post.

There averaged at the busy time about fifty or sixty daily, sometimes as many as two hundred, or even upwards.

The entire number of communications received, from first to last, including all upon general subjects, as well as letters bringing money remittances, was 59,115 *recorded*, besides *innumerable* others not of importance. 14,891 were on general subjects of local occurrence, grievance cases, &c., and did not contain remittances.

Immediately on receiving the letters, I set about opening and arranging them according to their different subjects.

I was so familiar with this process, from habit, that I could almost at a glance know to what class a letter belonged.

Sometimes a single communication would combine numerous heads—viz., money remittance,

inquiry, or demand respecting newspapers; proposal of persons to be wardens; application for cards, either as members or associates, or as both; suggestions, inquiries, or statements, as to news-rooms, and the Repeal news-room system generally; detail of grievances, &c. &c.

I wrote upon each letter when necessary a brief minute of instructions as to reply, &c.

Those of more intricate nature I answered myself: and it was my habit when the Liberator was in town, to take to him such as involved legal questions of nicety. He either instructed me himself how to deal with these, or, if they referred to documents too long for him to peruse, they were referred to some legal members of the Association for opinion and advice, &c., and the result duly communicated to the correspondents.

When the cashier had made his cash entries, the letters were taken through the other several departments, to have the requisites discharged,

1st. To the Newspaper department, where all orders, &c. regarding papers, were noted and attended to.

N.B.—The newspapers in question were of course those which were sent to districts contri-

buting ten pounds, according to the special rule in such cases. The contributors had their choice of the Pilot, Freeman, Weekly Register, and Nation.

2d. To the Warden, do. do.

3d. To the *Card-filling*, do. (That is, filling in names, dates, &c. on the respective cards.)

4th. To the Report and Document department, for supply of any printed books, reports, or documents required. This was a heavy office; and the costs of postage and carriage of parcels was occasionally very high indeed, under this item.

5th. To the *Scrivenery* departments, to have letters, or extracts and documents copied for publication.

In connexion with this department there was an arrangement of some interest, viz. the *manifolding process*, whereby we were enabled in the periods of the greatest influx of communications to supply all the Irish and English journals by the same post, (generally on the day of meeting,) with separate copies of all documents read at the Association, and which it would otherwise have been impossible with any amount of staff to accomplish. We also supplied the Government reporter, who

regularly attended our meetings, and took full reports of our proceedings.

It was merely an extension of the process of copying by means of *black paper*, which had previously been in general use, to the extent of probably two or three copies. By a variety of experiments and contrivances, I succeeded in obtaining so many as seven or eight fac-simile copies at the *same time*, and very soon familiarized the copyists with the method.

We had besides constant copying of documents, reports, &c. in the usual manuscript, especially during the existence of what was called the "Parliamentary" Committee of the Association.

It was the duty of another department to collect together from the other sections the cards filled, diplomas for wardens, printed documents, &c. to be transmitted, together with the letters of acknowledgment and advice thereof, and to forward the same by post or other conveyance.

Our despatches at the height of our operations filled two, sometimes three large baskets each post.

I made each person write upon the letter-list or other document, as it passed through his hands,

a certificate or memorandum of having discharged the particular duty assigned to him regarding it, so that any neglect could be at once traced; but indeed the whole system was so regular, that very few complaints were ever made, as you yourself know.

The following are specimens of the kind of certificate I speak of.

No. 1.

200 Cards, filled 5th August, 1843.

viz. 180 Associates. 20 Members.

The “Associates” were the contributors of one shilling; the “Members” either contributed, or collected, one pound.

No. 2.

Freeman's Journal and Weekly Register ordered accordingly.

J. WALLACE. 5 August, 1843.

No. 3.

Prize Essays, Printed Reports, &c. &c. (mentioning the numbers of each) sent accordingly.

R. O'CONNOR. 5 August, 1843.

No. 4.

T. M. RAY *wrote about this grievance case.*

5 August, 1843.

No. 5.

Six " Volunteer " Cards filled. *5 August, 1843.*

J. SMITH.

N.B. A " Volunteer " was a contributor, or a collector, of ten pounds Repeal Rent.

No. 6.

The several matters mentioned sent by post (or parcel).

6 August, 1843. R. O'CONNOR.

More or less of these certificates or memoranda were endorsed on the various documents coming to the Association, and not a few of them had the entire six.

I required of every person employed in the establishment that he should make a daily and particular entry of the nature of the business upon which he was employed.

At first each wrote his name as they arrived successively, in a day-book; but when the establishment increased largely, this could not be done within time, so that the method I took was to get each person to write his entry on a slip of paper.

These slips were pasted daily into guard-books, and formed the day-book of the business done.

There are thirty-three large volumes of these day-books.

I also established a system of fines for non-attendances, neglect, &c., unless excused by medical certificate.

I have before me a return of these fines for the year 1845; they amount to 15*l.* 17*s.* 8*d.* In every case at all deserving of it, these fines were subsequently restored, or made up for by a special donation.

THE LETTERS.

All letters sent were copied into letter-books, of which there are now sixteen volumes quarto of bank post paper.

When all requisites upon the documents were finally discharged, they were taken to the Filing department, and recorded in this manner:

The letters, lists, and documents, with money remittances, were pasted consecutively according to order of date into a set of *guard-books*, and the number corresponding with the number of the entry in the cash-book put on each.

These documents now comprise fifty-eight large *folio* volumes, each sixteen inches long, by ten inches wide, and seven or eight inches thick, and number from the first to the present 44,224 documents. They comprise also the original lists of the subscribers to each remittance, and were thence called the "REPEALERS' ROLL."

The letters received on general subjects were filed or pasted into quarto guard-books (letter size) in a similar way, and numbered consecutively from first to last. Of these there are forty quarto volumes, each six or seven inches thick, containing 14,891 letters. Of this class, were petty items of small amount, but these also had to be certified and vouched, and the vouchers preserved and produced to the auditors. No item, however small, even of a few pence, would be allowed without its due voucher.

All the vouchers of money-payments are in a similar manner pasted into guard-books, of which

there are now twenty-two similar folio volumes, each six inches thick; each voucher is numbered, corresponding with the number in the cash-book. There are in these books now 33,807 receipts of the payments from first to the present, varying in amount from some hundred pounds, to two or three pence each

There are sixteen folio cash-receipt books, and twelve cash-payment books.

Two large ledgers of these accounts, separated under the several heads of expenditure.

The cash department was managed by a cashier and book-keeper, with assistants when required.

The current accounts were furnished monthly, and all matters of printing, stationery, &c. were furnished upon contracts according to estimates for, and selected by the Committee. Every item in those accounts was checked carefully; the accounts were presented at one meeting of the Committee, and ordered to be paid at the next meeting if found correct; but if any question arose, a sub-committee was appointed to investigate and report upon it, in case the Finance Committee itself did not specially undertake the matter at an adjourned sitting appointed for the purpose.

Nothing could be paid without this check, and process of examination before Committee, and an order made by them and signed by the chairman, and three members at least present : except in so far as it pleased the Finance Committee occasionally to allow a small margin of three or four pounds, or thereabouts, for casual expenses, that could not well be postponed until their ordinary day of meeting. These, however, were accounted for in the same way as the rest. In addition to the arrangements already mentioned, to ensure a record of the remittances, &c., a statement of them was posted into county and provincial ledgers; so that we could always know how much came from any county, parish, or district.

We had also a series of alphabetical parochial ledgers, one for each county; containing all particulars as to wardens, committees, reports, repeal reading-rooms, &c.

There were volunteers, members, wardens, alphabetical list-books, and books of American contributors, as distinguished from British subjects; none but the latter being enrolled either as members or associates.

And a variety of others kept constantly in use.

Every thing was under such a state of arrangement, that any letter, receipt, or other document from first to last could be referred to in an instant.

THE REGISTRIES.

Besides the foregoing, there was an extensive department to manage the registries. This was under the superintendence of Mr. Crean, and occupied a staff of fourteen or fifteen persons.

We also had occasional registry agents in several provincial localities paid by the Association, besides extensive voluntary assistance by professional gentlemen, locally and otherwise.

One important item must not be forgotten—the *Scrap-books*—the *Repeal Scrap-books*—of which there are some eight or ten volumes, containing newspaper slips pasted in, with reports of every occurrence, remotely as well as intimately, connected with the Repeal movement.

These books are in fact a complete political history of Ireland for the years from 1839 to 1849.

So far for the mechanism of the Association.

It was the result of much hard thinking, and of many experiments ere I succeeded in getting it to work to my own satisfaction. When I did so, it worked silently and comfortably, without trouble to the Committee; and when we were attacked in 1843-4, and thereafter, I had to tax my mind to devise new adaptations of the existing system, for the exigences of the instant; so as to conform to the decisions upon the law at the previous prosecutions. All this was not done without laborious attention and anxiety.

During the periods of the monster meetings we managed all the details of arranging for them; corresponded with, and directed the local secretaries and committee-men; revised the resolutions in most cases; got the *placards, &c. &c. printed, and in every other way gave assistance.*

In 1841 we carried out all the difficult details of establishing the Dublin Corporation under the new law. This was all under my superintendence, and I got sundry votes of thanks, and some compliments, for having accomplished this laborious and difficult task.

I may say that all movements connected with the furtherance of the people's cause throughout

the kingdom, were either originated and worked, or assisted by the Association.

Now that the Association is reduced to inactivity, everything else throughout the country has languished and fallen.

The grants in "grievance" cases ran up to a sum on the whole of between 30,000*l.* and 40,000*l.*; and a considerable amount of money besides was disbursed in paying the fees of counsel and agent, and travelling expenses, &c. where local cases of persecution, oppression, and suffering, were considered to require the interposition of the popular Association.

In this respect great service was rendered to the people; many flagrant cases of injustice being arrested in their course, or at any rate detected and exposed, and their promoters made to feel the censure of public opinion. And without doubt, the occurrence of other cases was prevented, by the wholesome fear which was produced in the minds of the projectors of evil, by the activity of the Association in dragging such iniquities to light.

Even upon the ruthless class of "Exterminators," that is to say, landlords and landlords'

agents, who remorselessly set about evicting by wholesale the inhabitants of entire districts of land, there was a check imposed by the consciousness that a body existed who were watching their heartless proceedings, and would denounce them to the execration of all humane minds.

It was to this efficiency of the Repeal Association for the protection of the people, that the extreme hostility is owing, which the taskmasters and oppressors of the people of Ireland, whether Whig or Tory, have always manifested towards that Association; and still, notwithstanding the suspension of the latter's proceedings, continue to declare on every possible occasion.

Mr. Ray's notes thus continue:—

“As to the COMMITTEES.

There was the General and Finance Committee, consisting at the zenith of about 150 members. Of these the great majority were constantly active in the cause, and constantly attended the Committee when not absent from Dublin on local duties, or in the cases of members of Parliament, when not attending their duties as such.

The Committee had one regular day of meet-

ing, (Thursday in each week); but hardly a week passed without one or two additional meetings—sometimes one daily, when there was a press of business.

They investigated all matters of finance, audited all the accounts every week. These were besides submitted to, and investigated by the regular auditors about once a month.

They dealt with the passing questions of the day as those affecting the cause of Ireland.

I attended the meetings, and managed all details arising.

There was next the *Parliamentary Committee*, meeting almost daily during the session, for the purpose of examining, and reporting specially on all parliamentary documents, proceedings, &c. A member of this committee generally acted as secretary *pro tem.*—sometimes I did whenever I could. They had a committee-clerk, and one or two assistants. Some of their reports were merely read at the Association, and went through the papers, but were not collected in volumes.

Then there were the Sub-committees on various subjects, at various times. Among them were the following, viz.

Committees on Manufactures—Grievances—Poor-

law abuses — Extermination — Employment — Finance, &c. &c. &c.

You know best about these, for you worked most of them, and no man ever worked harder.

The operative departments of the office were in requisition to transact all details of copying work, &c. arising from these several Committees.

J. Brown, the printer, got a good deal to do by the Parliamentary Committee.

Then there was the *Musical Department*; will you say anything about that?

And the '82 Club?

This was in its constitution a distinct body, but our 'staff' had to do all the detailed work of it."

In answer to Mr. Ray's query, I will state that the "musical department," as he styles it, originated, according to my recollection, with Mr. Davis, who was exceedingly desirous that the Repeal Association should manifest a sympathy with, and a desire to encourage native talent and native art, in every branch and department. Mr. Smith O'Brien originated the idea of a band to be raised, taught, and maintained at the expense of the Association; which was accordingly done, and

a set of excellent instruments provided: the same which were disposed of at the Conciliation Hall auction the other day, at prices averaging about one-twentieth of their original cost.

The '82 Club, as Mr. Ray mentions in the foregoing notes, was entirely a distinct body from the Association; but having no *local habitation*, though it had a "name," the arrangement of the details of its working fell, like everything else, upon Mr. Ray and a few of his assistants. The idea of this Club was started during my father's absence at Darrynane Abbey, after our release from imprisonment in September, 1844. It was established to commemorate the great achievement of the year 1782; when by a unanimity of purpose and determination on the part of all classes in Ireland, unhappily too rare in our miserable annals, the encroachments of England upon the rights, powers, and privileges of the Irish Parliament, were put an end to; and the entire legislative independence of the Irish nation was asserted and vindicated; and, as men thought at the time, established finally and irreversibly.

The Club in question wore a uniform of much the same pattern and decorations as that worn on occasions of ceremony by the minor officials of

Government; but of a green colour instead of blue, and without a sword. This dress was also designed by the parties who originated the Club, and has since cut a figure in the unhappy State prosecutions of last year; some of the counsel for the Crown having shown a disposition to consider the mere fact of possessing such habiliments, as "flat burglary," to say the least.

The Club itself was an *exotic* in agitation. It had a sickly, rickety existence for a year and a half, and then disappeared from amongst the things that are, leaving nothing but old coats and tarnished embroidery behind.

I turn again to Mr. Ray's hasty memoranda:—

"Now as to the PUBLIC MEETINGS. These were held weekly, on Mondays. Seldom a special one, but sometimes.

We had often to call in additional hands for copying on meeting days.

The greatest press of letters was upon these days, for the people held back their remittances to the end of the week to make the display on Mondays; and no appeal we could frame—and we tried it a hundred times—could get them to alter their practice in this respect.

On the meeting days I was seldom or never able to examine all the letters prior to the meeting, but had to read and note many of them *while the meeting proceeded*.

I had two or three persons in attendance going back and forward to the clerks' office as documents were to be extracted, or copied in manifold, and brought down — when so done.

I never allowed any document to be read without first examining it, to see if it contained anything improper, or questionable; and I am so far fortunate, that in my hands nothing ever escaped to the detriment of the Association, or any of its members. It was not always, however, easy to get individual members who had received letters to be read in the hall, to adopt the same precautions; and hence difficulties sometimes arose, or were aggravated.

The business of next day after the meetings was, to record the proceedings, to prepare returns of cash received for publication, and discharge any unanswered queries, &c.; fill up and send off by post the cards applied for from the country, according to the amount of the several subscriptions, &c. &c.

The Minutes of the Proceedings of the Association now comprise ten volumes, containing also printed copies of all reports, letters and documents ordered to be entered on the Minutes.

Those of the Committee, eight volumes, exclusive of Sub-committee Minutes, and some odd scraps.

Then there were conferences, audiences, local meetings, squabbles to be appeased, &c. &c. daily occurring, which took plenty of your time and the Liberator's. I, myself, lost a couple of hours every day this way.

Then recollect all the reports we drew up and issued, for long before as well as during and after the existence of the Parliamentary Committee.

T. M. RAY,

Late Secretary of the Association."

Having thus given Mr. Ray's summary sketch of the machinery and working of the Association, we shall append to it the account of the same as given by a very different authority, the Irish Attorney-General of Sir Robert Peel's Government, in January, 1844, when making his opening speech at the State Prosecutions of that year,

against my father, myself, and others. I omit the comments which accompanied the statement, as they were but of the usual description with which a lawyer assails the conduct of the party opposed to his client; and as they were proved to have been utterly unwarranted, not a single point which was attempted to be made against the Association having been ultimately established.

The extract will serve the purpose of filling up any chinks in the statement contained in Mr. Ray's hastily-written notes.

*Extract from Speech of Attorney-General Smith,
(at present the Master of the Rolls in Ireland,)
in the case of the Crown against O'Connell and
others.—Hilary Term, 1844.*

“ It will now be necessary for me to bring before you the general nature of the constitution of this Association. It consists of associates, members, and volunteers. The class of associates was established with this view, to have some portion of those who were connected with the Repeal Association liable to pay but very small subscriptions to extend the organization throughout the

country, and make it to include, as far as might be, all the poorer classes. Accordingly, Gentlemen of the Jury, the associate has only to pay one shilling. A card is given to him (of which I hold a specimen in my hand) which answers all the purposes, without coming within the express language of the Act of Parliament against passwords and signs. It enables each person who shall possess himself of one, to show it, and thus to establish to his neighbour the fact, that he has become connected with the Loyal National Repeal Association.

There is nothing very particular upon this card. There is a representation of a shamrock at the top of it, with the words *Catholic*, *Protestant*, and *Dissenter* with a motto underneath it, viz.—*Quis separabit?* Then, there is the date of the year, ‘1782,’ of which I shall presently speak. Lower down, and near the bottom of the card, is a view of what is now the Bank of Ireland, in College Green, formerly the Irish Parliament House, with the words or motto, ‘*It was, and shall be!*’

Gentlemen, the next class in this Association are what are called properly, MEMBERS.

The *members* are those who pay twenty shillings a-year as their subscription to the funds and purposes of the Association. Or, if an ‘associate,’ who paid a shilling for himself, takes the trouble of collecting twenty other shillings, (*nineteen* with his own,) that, also, entitled him to be styled a ‘member,’ as fully as if he had paid the entire sum of twenty shillings out of his own pocket. To these ‘members,’ (whether paying the pound themselves, or merely collecting it,) a card was issued as a bond of union between them and the Repeal Association; and to the card in question, it is my duty now to direct your particular attention. Gentlemen, in one part of this card, you will find the words, in large letters and figures—

‘CLONTARF, 23d April, A.D. 1014;’
and in the opposite corner—

‘Benburb, 5th of June, 1645.’

At the bottom, in one corner, an Irish name, (*Bíálanathabuidhé*) which, being interpreted, signifies

‘*The Mouth of the Yellow Ford, 10th August, 1598,*’
and in the other corner at the bottom—

‘*Limerick, 9th to the 31st of August, 1690.*’

Now, Gentlemen, on one of the pillars at the side of this card, there is a statement of the geographical size of Ireland, contrasting it respectively with the kingdoms of Portugal, Norway, Naples, Denmark, and several other states, such as Greece, Switzerland, Holland, and Belgium, &c. The comparative population is also given, and the card then draws attention to the fact, that Ireland has not a parliament; while all these countries that are mentioned in comparison with her, have more or less the management of their own affairs. The card then goes on to state the yearly revenue, the exports and imports of Ireland: the sums supplied by her during the last great war with France. It states that the first and greatest general, and two-thirds of the men and officers of the English army and navy during that struggle, were Irishmen; and then it reiterates that 'Ireland has not a parliament.'

There are two flags upon the card—the one with the shamrock, exhibiting the same inscriptions and motto as that which I have already described to you, as upon the associates' cards. Upon the other flag is a device, which is described as the sun bursting from behind a cloud, which

I believe was the ancient banner of Ireland. In the middle of the card is a map of this country ; and I now pray your particular attention to what appears upon the scroll which is drawn at top. It is as follows:—

‘ Resolved unanimously—

That a claim of any body of men, other than the KING, LORDS AND COMMONS OF IRELAND, to make laws to bind this kingdom, is ILLEGAL, UNCONSTITUTIONAL, and a GRIEVANCE.

Resolution of the Dungannon Volunteers,

15th February, 1782.’

This then is the card of the members of this body:—

* * * *

Gentlemen, there is in this Association another class of persons of a higher rank than the members ; they are such individuals as have subscribed, or else have collected ten pounds Repeal rent ; and who thereby, according to a special rule of the Association, are entitled to the denomination of *Volunteers*. And I hold in my hand a card which I shall exhibit to you, being one of the cards of these volunteers. Upon it is engraved—

‘ *Volunteers of 1782, Revived.*’

It is signed at foot, Thomas Matthew Ray, Secretary, being one of the traversers in this case. There is at the head of this engraving a likeness of Mr. O'Connell. There is also one of the late Mr. Grattan—one of the late Mr. Flood; also representations of the two O'Neills, Hugh O'Neill and Owen Roe O'Neill—of General Sarsfield, and of Brien Borhormbe, monarch of Ireland.

Such having been the three great classes of persons connected with the Association, namely, associates, members, and volunteers, it was considered advisable for the better organization of the people of the country, that there should be certain agents of the society to superintend and keep them in communication with the central body. And accordingly there were appointed provincial Repeal inspectors, baronial inspectors, inspectors of Repeal wardens in minor districts, Repeal wardens and collectors. The Repeal wardens, according to the rule of the Association, were to be appointed at the recommendation of the clergyman of their particular parish. They were to be appointed upon his recommendation as I have said, but only *by* the Repeal Association itself. And

there were issued to each of those Repeal wardens thus nominated and appointed, a book of instructions as to the nature and extent of their duties. This book is entitled—

‘Instructions for the Appointment of Repeal Wardens, and of Collectors of the Repeal Fund, and the Duties of the same.’

In this book, the ninth duty of the Repeal wardens is set down to be—

‘To take care that there should be transmitted from the Association to each locality a weekly newspaper for every two hundred associates: or a three-day paper for every four hundred associates, enrolled in each locality as the case may be. The sum of ten pounds collected and forwarded to the Repeal Association, entitles the Repealers of the district sending that remittance to a weekly paper for the entire year; and the sum of twenty pounds entitles them to the *Pilot* or *Evening Freeman* (being three-day papers) for the same period, if they prefer them to two weekly papers.’

And the tenth duty of the Repeal wardens is—

‘To have the newspapers to which each parish or district may be entitled put into the hands of such persons as may give the greatest circulation

to their contents: so that each paper may be read by, and its contents communicated to as many people as possible, for the purpose of circulating the proceedings of the Repeal Association, and other repeal news by access to the newspapers. And in order to the better transacting of general business, it is recommended that wherever there is a sufficient number of Repealers enrolled, the wardens and collectors shall provide a convenient room to meet in.’”

Such was the description given of the machinery of the Repeal Association by Mr. Attorney-General Smith when prosecuting some of its members in 1844.

The fanciful devices on the cards which he thus described were nearly all put on them in 1843, at the suggestion, and on the motion of the late Mr. Davis, and the young gentlemen acting with him. Up to that time Mr. O’Connell had taken particular pains to keep the cards as plain in form and style as possible; to make them, in short, be more in the nature of receipts for the money paid in to the Repeal funds than as any thing else. The reason will be inferred from the remark of the

Attorney-General, as to avoiding "the express language of the Act of Parliament against passwords and signs." The additions made in 1843, by the banners, engravings of Irish "worthies," &c. did not make the cards transgress the boundary here alluded to ; but they rendered them less unimpeachable to a dexterous prosecutor. Mr. O'Connell never relished them much, but as there was no positive illegality, he did not like to offer any opposition to the wishes of Mr. Davis and his friends, and accordingly the additions were made.

In dwelling upon the "Instructions to Repeal Wardens," the Attorney-General took care not to allude to the prominence given in them to the point of *keeping the peace and observing the law*, and of seeing that others did the same. Nothing was so strongly and strictly enjoined as this ; nor more frequently repeated. He was in court, however, as the mere retained lawyer of the prosecution, and of course used counsel's privilege to suppress everything that was at all favourable to the opposite party ; and to exaggerate and aggravate whatever was capable of being misinterpreted or wrested to a damaging purpose.

If the reader's patience will bear with a very brief examination and discussion of the State Trials themselves, which I shall presently approach, it will not be difficult to show how utterly untenable were the charges made against the agitation and against the chief mover of it, the Arch-agitator, Daniel O'Connell.

CHAPTER VI.

REPEAL MISSIONS. — MULLINGAR. — DR. CANTWELL. — NEW CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL. — CARRICK-ON-SHANNON. — BOYLE. — ROCKINGHAM. — SCENERY. — CASTLEREA—ITS CHURCH.—CASTLEBAR.—BALLINASLOE FAIR.—PROPOSAL TO WAYLAY MR. O'CONNELL.—OTHER ATTEMPTS TO DESTROY HIM.—FEARGUS O'CONNOR.—MR. O'CONNELL'S PRESENCE OF MIND.—THE DUBLIN PRESS.—MEETING AT THE ROYAL EXCHANGE—COMPELLED TO ESCAPE.—THE “NATION.”—YOUNG IRELAND.—THOMAS DAVIS. — SMITH O'BRIEN.—GAVAN DUFFY.—THE YOUNG IRELANDERS.—REPEAL DISCUSSION.—SPEECH OF MR. O'CONNELL.

UPON the 12th of September, 1842, Daunt and I set out upon our Repeal missions, and had a weary eight hours *drag* of it in the Royal Canal *fly-boat*—so denominated because of its going at a most snail-like pace. Mullingar was our resting-place for the night, where his lordship, Dr. Cantwell, the Catholic Bishop of Meath, most kindly received us. Next day we jingled across the country over a most villanous road, up one hill and down another to Ballymahon, where we arrived after only one break down on the way. The Right Reverend Dr. O'Higgins, Catholic Bishop of Ardagh, here extended his hospitality to us;

and we involuntarily gave him a very bad return for his great kindness, by being the occasion of an enormous crowd assembling in the evening outside his door and on his lawn, with bonfires and a band of music,

“Breathing most eloquent discord !”

Speechifying from the window over the portico became the order of the night ; and a very excellent Repeal meeting was thus improvised for us, and carried out in every way most satisfactorily.

Next morning, we being near the bounds of our respective provinces, Daunt and I parted, he remaining behind in not the best condition in the world for *agitating*, inasmuch as he was suffering under a very severe *sore throat*. At Longford, breakfasted, and snatched a moment to see the very fine and extensive Catholic Cathedral, then about two or three years in progress of building, and not yet near completed. It is of Grecian architecture of the most chaste and correct taste, and is in the form of a Greek cross, with at the end a vestibule—whereby hangs a tale. A poor old countrywoman who went to see the new building much about the time of my visit, was highly delighted with the vestibule, and passed the follow-

ing comment upon it, and upon the vast space beyond, then enclosed by the yet roofless walls of the intended Church raised about twenty feet from the ground.

“ Oh, what a darling *little chapel*, and what a beautiful ber-rin’ place (burying-place) that is, *just back of it!*”

At the time I saw the rising cathedral, a prophecy concerning it had just been fulfilled, greatly to the disconcerting of the soothsayer. He was a Clergyman of the Established Church, of very ultra-ascendency politics, and exceedingly wrath with “the Papists” at their audacity in no longer contenting themselves with the wretched mud hovel in which the sacred mysteries of their religion had from the time of the Penal Laws been celebrated, but aspiring to build and possess a church, larger than any the State religion could boast of in the province. Unfortunately for him, his way in and out of Longford town, lay directly by the front of the “Papists’” new cathedral; and it was a standing source of amusement with the people, to watch the gesture of infinite disgust which he invariably betrayed whenever he passed the obnoxious structure. One day he took par-

ticular notice of the observation to which he was thus subjected ; and in the height of his anger the spirit of prophecy came upon him.

“ Ay,” said he, “ it’s all mighty fine. You think you are great fellows to be building so big a church : but I tell you that the first sermon that is preached in it, will be by a Protestant minister ! ”

His words came literally true ! A sermon for a charitable purpose was preached in 1842 within the roofless enclosure, and by a much-respected gentleman in the Orders of the Church of England—the Honourable and Reverend George Spencer, brother of the late, and uncle to the present, Earl Spencer. Unhappily for the prophet, the Rev. Gentleman was then for some years a convert to the Catholic Faith, and had recently received Priest’s orders in the Church of Rome !

At Carrick-on-Shannon, where I arrived upon the evening of the 13th of September, I was at length on *my own* ground, and my labours were to begin. On the next day there was a great gathering of the people on the market-place, around a hastily-constructed hustings ; and hence several of the local orators and myself had to make

speeches for three or four hours by Carrick-on-Shannon clock. A public dinner in the market-house appropriately wound up the proceedings of the day; and all went merry at it as a marriage bell! I had for the first time to unload my *pack*, and commence distributing the Repeal tracts, pamphlets, &c. with which our Committee had entrusted me for the purpose. And this and all other occurring duties being most punctually discharged, I got to bed early *next* morning, heartily fagged with the first day of the campaign.

Note-book resumed—

“*Friday, September 16, 1842.*—Engaged all the morning writing my first grand *Report* as *Repeal* Inspector, and letters of various kinds. Also in receiving visits. Off at noon on Bianconi’s car to Boyle, greatly *shouted* at starting, by the people: not a little to the disgust and discomfiture of a stiff and pinched-up sort of personage upon the same side of the car with me—with the Boyne water and William the Third in his very look. We did not, however, come to scratching faces during our drive. At Boyle, — and I left the high-road, hiring a car to take us a cross-route; and a cross-route it certainly was, through the

village of French Park to Ballaghaderreen, in the county of Mayo. Passed Lord Lorton's beautiful domain of Rockingham on this route, and some of the most noted sheep-walks of the sheep-feeding county of Roscommon, and arrived at our abiding place by 6 P.M. No fish for our dinner on this fish-day, so we had to make shift otherwise. Fried eggs for first course, boiled eggs for second, besides a running accompaniment of toast and butter; and then (the people having gathered under the windows), we had by way of *dessert*, a little *speechification* with a bonfire of *green* wood directly under our noses!

“In the evening to the Parish priest's to tea, (the Rev. Mr. Tighe,) escorted by our late auditory. Returned after a pleasant hour and got to bed, where I had the serenade of a rusty sign-post in a high wind, and was “lulled by soft zephyrs” through the rickety window-frames. My comrade had pretty much the same experiences in his room. But we did very well; and the poor woman of the house left nothing untried to make us comfortable.

“*Sunday, 18th.*—An extremely good parochial Repeal meeting on the outskirts of the village of

Carra Castle, County Mayo, Mr. Phillips of Clonmore House, J. P. &c. in the chair. Great spirit amongst the people, and most martyr-like attention to our three or four hours *speechifying* ! A wild, dreary, desolate country, *scrubby* fields, loose stone fences, wretched cabins, and a very poor looking population. About Carrick-on-Shannon, and from thence on through Boyle on my way here, and nearly as far as Ballaghaderreen, there was a good deal of interesting and some fine scenery, but I now seem to have gotten into the wilds. The high-roads very good, where *they are above water*, several of them being flooded ; but let no unhappy wight adventure himself upon the cross-roads, for they are truly *cross-roads* ! And above all, let him carefully eschew all *short-cuts* ; no matter how fair seeming, or how strongly recommended by his driver. Otherwise sorely will he rue, in his sides and all his bones, his unhappy facility of disposition ! I speak *avec connaissance de cause*.

“ The next stage of my journey, after leaving the very hospitable house of Mr. Phillips, where two days passed merrily over, forming one of those pleasant interludes that occasionally relieve the

hard, dry work of agitation, was Castlerea, in the county of Roscommon, where I expected to receive answers to all the letters written respecting further meetings, and so to be able to arrange the plan of my campaign.

“ With the single break of a short trip to the town of Roscommon, not more than six or seven miles distant, to arrange there for a Repeal meeting at a later period, I had little to occupy me after the first day in Castlerea, where I spent a weary week. By a mistake I left it before the preparations for the Tuam meeting were brought to completion, and I had accordingly a further delay in that town. The meeting, however, proved well worthy of being *waited for*.”

The Catholic church of the town, the cathedral of the Catholic archdiocese of Tuam, is a small but very striking specimen of the florid Gothic,—the work of a native architect, and one who, I believe, was never out of the province of Connaught in his life. It reflects infinite credit upon him, and upon the zeal and piety of the Catholic population of the archdiocese. It is not for me to praise the admirable exertions in this as in every other good work of the truly admirable Archbishop, his Grace Dr. MacHale, without whose

energy and judicious and enlightened superintendence the sacred building never could have been what it is. His personal kindness and condescending attention to me while in Tuam, I can never forget.

After this I had a wild and toilsome and lengthened day's journey to Castlebar, to attend a great meeting there, and another to get back in time for the Roscommon meeting. It is inconceivable, save by actual experience, what bleak desolation one sees on every side in the remote regions of the west, and what poverty among the people. The year 1842 was not a particularly bad year in that district, and yet the misery was heart-rending to witness. What it has been during the last two years, and *is* unfortunately at this moment, human language cannot describe!

The near approach of the celebrated 'Ballinasloe Fair,' with all its pre-occupying arrangements, warned me to cut short my mission, and accordingly I arrived in Dublin early in October, to make report in person to the Association.

"Repeal" lingered on during the rest of the year 1842, not making much progress, but yet not losing ground. The country missions, especially those of my brother "Inspectors-General!" who

had better roads and means of travelling than Connaught supplied, and no "Ballinasloe Fair" to run away from, began to bear fruit towards the end of the year; and one point at least was said to have been gained, viz. the removing much of the ingrained suspicion which I have before alluded to as existing in the popular mind, with regard to our sincerity of purpose.

It was, I find, in the autumn of 1841, and not of 1842, that my father made the expedition I have previously alluded to, on "Repeal" agitation business, to the city of Belfast.

The invitation came from the hearts of the ardent Repealers of that city, and therefore the faults of judgment might well be excused. But the consequences were injurious to the interests of the Repeal cause in the north, and narrowly escaped being fatal to the man whom it was sought to honour. A magistrate of the County Down told the late Mr. Davis, by whom the circumstance was communicated to my father, that a plan had been arranged among a party of Orangemen, some of them in the rank of gentlemen, to watch for the arrival of his carriage at a spot on the Belfast road, where high earthen banks over-

hung the way, and when it came within reach, to hurl large stones down upon it, and kill and crush all whom it might contain!

There were also other devices in progress, of various details, but with the same fell purpose. Mr. O'Connell disarranged them all by starting two days earlier than he was expected, having previously taken the precaution of getting one of his chosen travelling companions, (who were poor Tom Steele, Charles O'Connell, Esq., of Ennis, and Nicholas Markey, of Louth—men whose devotion to him was long known and proved,) to write on beforehand, under an assumed name, to order horses to be ready at all the posting stages.

Twice before in his life had attempts at destroying, or at least seriously injuring him, been conceived and baffled. In the first, somewhere about the year 1825 or 1826, it had been arranged, that as he changed horses in the town of Castlewellan, County Down, on his way to attend a northern assizes, in a case for which he had received a special retainer, the armed Orangemen of the district should pour into the town, and, taking occasion of some *got-up* riot with the Catholic peasants who were known to intend

meeting him there, to use their arms, and in the confusion to shoot him dead. This was hastily whispered to him by a Catholic shopkeeper, just as he drove up to the door of the inn where the horses were to be changed.

“For God’s sake, don’t stop at all—don’t stop one moment, Mr. O’Connell. The Orangemen are pouring in; go on with the horses you have.”

A word to the postilions—poor *Papists* themselves—was enough; and away the carriage went, with the jaded horses lashed into a gallop. “The more haste the less speed,” says the old adage, and it held true on this critical occasion. Just as the carriage left the town, and was rapidly descending a steep hill, one of the horses fell, and the other three tumbled in a heap over him, smashing pole and harness all to fragments. Mr. O’Connell was inclined to remain by the vehicle, while his servant should go back to the town to procure the other horses and a pole; but the servant literally would *not permit* him. This was a man of singularly high feeling and devoted attachment to my father, and of the purest character in every respect. For upwards of twenty years, until his death in 1834, he most faithfully served my father,

and attended him more with the care of a devoted and affectionate clansman and fosterer of the olden time, than with that of a mere servant, however zealous and attentive. Only twice in the year was he ever known of himself to speak to my father, and those occasions were on Christmas and Easter days, when he saluted him in the morning with the good wishes of the season.

This faithful creature literally *insisted* on being left by himself. "They will do nothing to me, Sir," said he, in answer to remonstrance: "I am a servant. Do you take the pistols and go on!—Go on, Sir—or *I will leave your service for ever!*"

His master had to submit, and accordingly proceeded with Nicholas Markey through some plantations which enabled them to cut off a large angle of the road. Meantime the truth of the stories they had been told was evidenced by the signal shouts, whistles, &c. &c. that were beginning to be heard on every side as the Orangemen gathered from various quarters towards the spot the travellers had so lately left; and when the carriage overtook the latter about half-an-hour afterwards, the valet reported that he had been surrounded, and pretty closely questioned by

armed countrymen, who had then gone off towards the town, conceiving that their intended victim might have returned thither. Of course they had not inflicted the slightest injury on the valet, although sorely vexed at missing their mark.

The second attempt at doing Mr. O'Connell bodily injury, occurred some few years previous to his Belfast expedition. The first posting stage out of Limerick, on the Dublin road, is that of Birdhill, being about ten miles of an exceedingly good road. On his return from one of his annual visits to Darrynane Abbey, Mr. O'Connell had, as usual with him, slept in the city of Limerick, and started early next morning, fortunately with four good horses, who kept at an even gallop the whole way to Birdhill. The good fortune of the circumstance was not on account of the trifling gain of time, but on the more serious account, that on the carriage "bringing up" at the inn-door at Birdhill, the discovery was made that the pins of all four of the axletrees of the wheels had been tampered with, apparently by filing them half through. All but one of them had broken across at the damaged part; and nothing but the speed and straight driving of the postilions pre-

vented two or three of the wheels from coming off upon the way. Who were the artificers of this attempt there never have been any means of knowing.

Stones were thrown in at the windows of a room where Mr. O'Connell was received in Belfast, at a kind of political *soirée*, and some ladies of the party seriously injured. The front windows of the hotel at which he was staying were also demolished by the valiant and peaceable heroes of the Boyne Water. Other violences were also manifested; and, on Mr. O'Connell's departure for Donaghadee, where he was to take the mail-steamer for Downpatrick, on his way to the north of England, whither he had been invited to attend some Reform demonstrations, he had to be escorted by a considerable body of police, who saw him safe on board.

In England, there was a new danger. Feargus O'Connor, from the moment that the fact of an invitation to Mr. O'Connell had become public, employed his newspaper week after week, in inviting the Chartists to meet the man who had denounced their violence, and kept the Irish people from making common cause with them;

and to visit him with some mark of their displeasure, when he should arrive at the scene of the intended Reform gatherings.

“Brother Chartists,” wrote the redoubtable Feergus in his journal, number after number, “I have given you many days; do you now give *me* one day. Meet O’Connell, who denounced you,” &c. &c.

Whether they fully obeyed these exhortations, or what were to be the “marks of displeasure” with which they were invited to visit the offending individual thus pointed out to them, history sayeth not. A fortunate accident, or couple of accidents, delayed Mr. O’Connell’s arrival for nearly forty-eight hours; and so deranged all preparations, whether of a friendly or a hostile nature, that may have been made to receive him. The packet reached Port Patrick at dead low water of a spring tide, and his carriage could not be landed till after half-flood. And when at length he had got in motion, and had made some forty or fifty miles of his *journey*, the vehicle broke down, and occasioned a much longer delay.

Thus, both in Ireland and in England, from Irish Orangemen, and their counterparts in

violence and intolerance, the English physical-force Chartists, he had been threatened and imperilled almost simultaneously, and had escaped by what appeared to his family little else than an interposition of a merciful Providence.

On each of the occasions I have narrated, he manifested the coolest, most collected and resolved courage, cheerfulness and presence of mind. These qualities were, also, most strikingly demonstrated on yet another difficult and still more perilous occasion, a year or two before the Repeal agitation was resumed. The unhappy and disastrous combination-system, that has worked such mischief and misery among the artisan-population of England and Scotland, has not failed to add its quota of ruin to the other depressing causes that have crushed down industry in the towns and cities of Ireland. Some very bad cases of violence and outrage have occurred in Dublin under this unhappy system; but it is only justice to say, that they have been rare, as compared with what appears on the criminal records of the seats of manufacturing industry in Great Britain.

At the time I am now alluding to, a sudden

spring and stimulus appeared to have been given to the Dublin trade-combinations; and very alarming symptoms of misconduct and resolute mischievousness had manifested themselves. A large proportion of the Press of Dublin were paralysed in their efforts to stay the evil, by combinations among the operatives engaged in some of the newspaper offices. One journal, an ultra-Orange organ, actually sided with and took the part of the combinator. In this state of things, alarm and confusion in every one's mind, and the whole current of business impeded and disturbed, Mr. O'Connell came forward, and, although well aware that he was forfeiting much of political support, the operative tradesmen of Dublin having always been warmly in favour of a Repeal of the Legislative Union, he strongly and uncompromisingly denounced their conduct, and warned them of the penalties and dangers they were incurring. A large proportion of their number, who had either never joined the combinator, or had been only temporarily misled by them, approved his efforts, and attended to his voice; but the turbulent and the noisy in this, as in other matters, made theirs appear the pre-

vailing sentiment, and adopted active measures of annoyance; hooting him in the streets, and interrupting and throwing into confusion and violent disorder the meetings he attempted to hold for the purpose of arguing the point with them. It became necessary, in the opinion of his family and friends, if not in his own, that he should be attended when walking in the streets, and particularly on the occasion of the last discussion he attempted to have with the combinators.

This took place in a large upper room of the Royal Exchange buildings in Dame Street, with the Lord Mayor (of the then *unreformed* Dublin Corporation) in the chair, supported by the two Sheriffs. My father, and such of us as had come with him, including my brother Daniel and myself, were at his lordship's right, and the rest of the room was crowded with the combinators, among whom it was ascertained that a number of young college boys, boiling over with the extreme Orangeism then sedulously spread among the college boys by some of the Fellows of that establishment, had mixed themselves, with the amiable object of instigating the already excited operatives to make some attack on O'Connell.

We had two hours of a most stormy scene. For near three-fourths of that time my father was not only on his legs, but had actually mounted on the table, to make himself the more conspicuous to his assailants; and there he stood, with his arms folded, and a smile upon his countenance, undergoing an almost uninterrupted storm of howlings, revilings, and execrations. From time to time he essayed to speak, and to argue calmly with them; but was seldom permitted to utter more than three or four sentences, and occasionally not so many words, ere the din of war recommenced with tenfold fury and bitterness.

Two or three small shopkeepers, well known as active partizans among the Orange party, seemed to be the chosen *spokesmen*—if such a word can be used in describing a scene where men yelled and shouted rather than spoke. All efforts, however, in this way to daunt Mr. O'Connell, or even to make him appear in the least angry, utterly failed; and then the last and potent argument was brought into play—namely, a rush at him, with the evident intention of committing some violence. The poor Lord Mayor was tumbled over in the charge; but fortunately his lordship and the

Sheriffs were enabled, as well as ourselves, to effect a retreat through a door behind the chair ; protecting our rear as we did so, by the simple and very serviceable expedient, which I strongly recommend to parties in similar jeopardy, of crossing two benches behind us, over which the leaders of the pursuing host stumbled and fell ; and so broke the rush of their followers. Some of our party had arms about them, but had the good sense to abstain from showing them, when it became apparent that the *stool-barricade* had done its business.

As we left the Royal Exchange, and walked down Dame Street, the extraordinary spectacle was presented—a spectacle extraordinary indeed in Dublin—of Daniel O'Connell hissed, hooted, and all but *pelted* by a crowd of his fellow-citizens—most of them Catholics whom he had emancipated, and for whose real interests he was still labouring and contending.

The better-conditioned, that is to say, the far larger proportion of the tradesmen, who had fallen into this temporary error, speedily saw and confessed how mistaken they had been ; and gave him their confidence again with renewed and increased

fervour. The small minority of evil-disposed, idle, and dissolute, preserved their rancour against him for the rest of his life; and were prominent amongst those whose efforts, and, unhappily, successful efforts, at sowing and spreading division among the Repeal party, and whose reckless and persevering slanders and calumnies, embittered the closing months of his life.

It was about the month of October, or of November, in the year 1842, that the "NATION" newspaper was established, and that its talented proprietor, together with several of the young gentlemen who came afterwards to be known as the "Young Ireland" party, began to identify themselves with the Association.

From hence to the end of these "Experiences" I shall have the difficult task of alluding pretty frequently to those gentlemen, and to the unhappy differences which occasioned their secession from us four years later, and the schism in the popular body. Writing at a period removed but by so short an interval from some of the chief circumstances connected with that schism, and its ever deplorable results, I am very conscious that I shall be open to much suspicion; and that my personal

feelings will be considered to enter largely into the opinions that I may express upon the matter. Yet I will not be deterred by this peril, feeling conscious that there is no wilful design on my part to exaggerate, to misrepresent, or to do injustice in any point, or in any way.

“Nothing extenuate—nor set down aught in malice.”

The gentlemen of the Young Ireland party who first joined us, were, as I recollect, the late much lamented and highly talented Thomas Davis, Charles Gavan Duffy, at present, and for nine months back, a prisoner under a charge of treason-felony, for which he has already been tried, without a verdict having been come to; and for which it is understood that he is to be tried again this month; Thomas M'Nevin, Esq., a young barrister of much promise and ability, snatched away by death just as he was bidding fair to become distinguished in his profession; and John Dillon, Esq., also a young barrister of much ability, and with many claims to respect. Mr. Dillon is at this time, unhappily, a political refugee in the United States, having been mixed up with the insurrectionary movement of last July, greatly against his judgment, as it is understood; and

through a feeling of honourable self-devotion, which would not permit him to separate himself from his less judicious friends.

The "NATION" newspaper requires no words of mine to bear testimony to the talent and information with which its pages were extensively marked. It ranked among its contributors young men of great and varied talent, especially poetic talent; and it is not unfair to say of it that the poetic talent rather predominated; pervading even the *prose articles* in their spirit, their sentiments, their wording, and not a little too in their argumentation.

I can give this praise without suspicion to the contributors, because although I had the honour of being mentioned in the programme of the newspaper as one of its intended contributors, I never was so beyond three articles, one of the most veritable and *truly prosaic prose*; and two of *rhyme*, doubtless still more prosaic and heavy.

Thomas Davis, it is needless for me to say, was a man of no ordinary stamp. He had much genius, a fervid and at times a brilliant imagination, singular energy and earnestness, indomitable industry, and a power of retaining all that he

acquired ; and, if I may use the word, of *utilizing* at the spur of the moment, and giving practical and pungent application to his information and ideas, such as few men are found to possess.

The unhappy social circumstances of Ireland had their reflection in his character. He was a Protestant, and of a family, as has been generally understood, rather tending to *ultraism* in its political and sectarian opinions. To those who know with what unhappy sedulousness these tendencies are instilled into the minds of the Protestant youth of Ireland, and how carefully they are cultivated, it is always a matter of surprise and rejoicing when a young Protestant is found to separate himself at all from the extreme ascendancy party in that country, and to show a disposition to range himself upon the side of the great mass of the people in their struggle for political ameliorations. This Davis did, and with all the more credit to himself, that it was quite evident he had a severe struggle to “screw his courage to the sticking-point,” and that the struggle was by no means terminated when he took the decisive step of enrolling his name on the books of that body most obnoxious to all true-blue Orangemen,

the "Loyal National Repeal Association of Ireland."

There was evidently a continual contest going on in his mind between an ardent and enthusiastic love of country, and an inherited and educated aversion to "Popery," and nothing could be more creditable to him than the plain evidences deducible from his writings, that as time rolled on the native goodness and purity of his mind was enabling it to emancipate itself almost every day more and more from the trammels of early prejudice. To the last something of this remained to be done, as was shown by one or two indications of a marked, although not of a very important character: but had he been spared to the country which he loved so well, there can be little doubt that a cordiality and identification of feeling would have resulted between him and those whom the Orange papers denominated the extreme Papist party among the Repealers. At any rate it was the conviction of those who came under the latter denomination, that he was of all the "Young Ireland" party, the one most likely to be reconciled to "pull in harness" with the "Old Irelanders."

In nothing was the mental struggle just alluded

to more visible than in his dealings with my father. Opposite feelings in this instance most evidently contended for the mastery. O'Connell had been the bugbear of his youth, as of that of most of his class and creed, until he had insensibly associated the idea of the great PAPIST AGITATOR with every thing that was forbidding and to be avoided and detested. A noble sympathy, a common love of country now brought these two men together; and it may be permitted to a son to say, that no one ever was long in intercourse with Daniel O'Connell without being won over by his genial kindliness of disposition, and his warm open-heartedness. Davis was no exception to this general rule; and he early conceived, and I sincerely believe retained to the moment of his sadly premature and much lamented death, a warm admiration of the once abhorred "Daniel O'Connell," and a strong and earnest regard for him. These sentiments were undoubtedly mixed up with remnants of the old prejudices and preconceived opinions; but they were not the less warm and real.

William Smith O'Brien did not originally belong to the party of which these and other young gentlemen whose names I shall presently mention,

were the leaders: nor did he join us for nearly nine months later.

To the abilities of Mr. Gavan Duffy, his own newspaper has borne the best and most sufficient testimony. It is true that he received much assistance from the other gentlemen named, as well as from a crowd of less noted, but scarcely less talented contributors. But his own light was not obscured thereby; and it would be the rankest injustice as well as absurdity to advance any thing calculated to induce the belief for a moment that he did not personally contribute in a very eminent degree to the success of his newspaper.

In fact, while he was remarkably liberal in opening his columns to the literary attempts of others, and in encouraging them to "try again" and gallantly encounter

———" the jaundiced eye
Of the cold Critic,—keen upon a fault,
But dull as stone to merit,"

he fairly and readily entered into the lists with them; maintained a worthy rivalry with their best efforts, and not seldom bore away the palm.

For reasons obvious in themselves and obviously sufficient, I abstain from comment upon the par-

ticular part borne by Mr. Duffy in the controversies that divided and broke up the popular party during the two unhappy years from June 1846 to June 1848 ; and I do so the more readily, as well as the more properly, from the fact that he is about for the second time to be put upon his trial. And from the circumstances attending the conduct of the Irish Government towards him, especially in the flagrant instance of the tampering with the arrangement of the jury lists, he is entitled to the sympathy and not to the criticism of every lover of fair play and even-handed justice.

With regard to many among the most active of the Young Ireland party, there is a remark that may be made without fear of its being taken as aimed at individuals, however applicable to a class.

If Thomas Davis may be said to have been as it were an illustration of one phase of the unhappy social circumstances of Ireland, many of his young Catholic cooperators exhibited a reflection of yet another. Davis manifested the struggles of the spirit of nationality seeking to free itself from its old trammels, in a country where for many a year the demon of sectarianism had been constantly evoked by interests alien to the soil, in order, and

with a view to check the developments of that nationality. The section of Catholics I allude to displayed the workings of the same spirit under other difficulties, quite as sedulously fostered and encouraged for the same evil purpose, by the same anti-Irish influences,—the difficulties arising from impatience of the leading, and intolerance of the counsels of a brother Catholic.

Unconsciously to themselves they were made tools in the hands of enemies of their creed and country; whose only hope of successfully resisting the mighty moral movement of the Irish people was by sowing division among its chief promoters and guides. The genius and ability of several of the Young Irelanders only made them the more useful tools of these deep designers and abettors of mischief;—ever on the watch for an opportunity to inflict a heavy blow and a great discouragement upon the national cause.

The differences which afterwards came to such an unhappy head, showed themselves early in our Committee, after the first accession of the Young Irelanders. In the winter of 1842 we had three or four disputes and divisions; figuring forth upon a small scale, what afterwards occurred upon a

large We had more than one division in Committee on full-formed projects of the wildest impracticability: we had several discussions upon suggestions not savouring of a very profound degree of wisdom, or acquaintance with the habits, ways, and moving principles of the everyday world around us.

In one of our gravest and longest prepared *conciliabula*, it was solemnly propounded by two young men of no insignificant mark among the new accessions to our ranks, that the best way to agitate for, and advance the Repeal cause, would be *not to hold meetings—not to invite the people to connect themselves with any particular body—and not to mention the word REPEAL at all!!*

“ The name should ne’er be heard ;
Our lips should be forbid to speak
That once familiar word ! ”

Naturally enough we stared not a little at the originators of this deep policy ; but they were not at all discomfited thereby ; proceeding, on the contrary, to debate their plan, and support it with arguments most transcendently mystical, and most mystically profound ! However, whether it was owing to mental obtuseness, or whatever the cause may have been, Daniel O’Connell remained un-

persuaded, and inclined to persevere in his unromantic, if not unphilosophic practice of speaking out plainly to the people, telling them in everyday English what would be the real remedy for their accumulated grievances, and for the distresses of their country, and exhorting them to combine and come together to labour for this great remedy.

Early in 1843—the eventful year 1843—the “Repeal discussion” took place in the Corporation of Dublin. Mr. O’Connell gave notice of it at a very early period in January; and when he found that public attention was not sufficiently excited on the subject against the arrival of the date first named by him for opening it,—he, with *malice prepense*, adjourned the matter again, and succeeded beyond his utmost expectations, in thus causing discussion and excitement with regard to it. The able gentlemen representing the Conservative party in the Corporation did not perceive his object, and fell into the trap he had laid for them, violently complaining of the postponement, and in a manner triumphing over it as a *quasi*-abandonment of the long-talked of motion. Their simulated anxiety for the discussion was at length gratified by him upon Tuesday, February 28.

The following is the kind of descriptive introduction given in the special report of the proceedings of this and the following two days, when the great question of the legislative independence of Ireland was at last brought before them by Mr. O'Connell, under the form of a proposition for a petition to Parliament on that subject.

*Repeal Discussion in the Dublin Corporation,
Tuesday, February 28, 1843.*

“ This being the day appointed for the bringing forward of Alderman O'Connell's motion for the discussion of the great question of the REPEAL OF THE UNION, the City Assembly House, in William Street, was, from a very early hour in the morning, surrounded by hundreds of the populace, who testified by their presence, their earnest countenances, and their frequent cheers, the deep interest which they felt to ascertain what arguments could possibly be urged against the Legislative Independence of their native land.

“ It was evident, from the day the honourable and learned Alderman had put his notice of motion on the books of the corporation, that not only the

inhabitants of the city of Dublin, but the universal people of Ireland, felt that he had taken a course more likely to forward the cause of 'REPEAL,' than any other which human wisdom or foresight could have possibly suggested; and the result was looked to with an intensity of interest that it would be perfectly impossible adequately to describe.

“ The great champion of his country's liberty, Daniel O'Connell, M.P., accompanied by several members of the town-council, arrived in William Street at half-past ten o'clock in the forenoon, and was received with deafening peals of acclamation by the people outside, which as soon as he entered were renewed by those who had previously filled the house. The other members of the council arrived in quick succession, and before eleven o'clock the gallery and body of the house were filled to suffocation by those who had been fortunate enough to obtain tickets of admission. The table in the centre of the Council Chamber was appropriated to the use of the gentlemen of the press, for whom every possible accommodation was made; and on no occasion since the Union were there ever known to be assembled together so many reporters of the Dublin press, or correspondents of the lead-

ing English journals, not only in London, but in some of the provinces.

“ The Lord Mayor arrived at eleven o’clock, and was received with marked applause, as well by the populace outside, as the members and strangers who filled the house.

“ Mr. Alderman Butt, the great Union advocate, arrived immediately after, and was warmly greeted by his friends and some of the members opposed to him, among whom was his great opponent O’Connell, who warmly shook hands with him.

“ After some routine business was disposed of,

“ Alderman O’Connell rose amidst great cheering, and proceeded to address the assembly. He said,—I am an Irishman; I am an ardent admirer of the fair and fruitful land of my birth—my fatherland. I am an Irishman, and I have full faith and entire confidence in the noble and exalted qualities of my countrymen the inhabitants of that land—of all my countrymen (hear, hear); all partake of the generous, hospitable, and brave spirit, so inherent in my countrymen; and if there be an exception, the number is so small, and their motives are so obvious, that they are as nothing against the immense multitudes that I believe to

be deserving of national dignity, and dishonoured by provincial degradation. (Hear, hear, and loud cheers.) I am proud of the position that I now occupy. (Loud cheers.) It is not merely as the representative of the metropolis of my native land, but standing forward as I do the advocate of Ireland and Irishmen—standing forward for the rights and liberties of Ireland—standing forward to assert that she has a right to be reckoned amongst the nations of the earth, and that the Irish people are not so degraded and disqualified as to be unfit to govern themselves. (Cheers.) Oh! it is pleasing to reflect that everything I can possibly say with justice, that every description I can give and put prominently forward, as to the superior fertility, station, and natural qualities of my country; the more, in fact, I can truly praise her, the more I can advance my own case in this discussion. (Hear, hear, and loud cheers.) The more I can pay a just tribute to the virtues of her inhabitants, the more are the reasons and arguments augmented and increased by which the demand I make for national regeneration should be irresistibly yielded to. (Loud cheers.) My case consists in the importance of Ireland as a

nation; my case consists in the merits and virtues of her inhabitants. (Loud cheers.) I feel, I trust, not an ungenerous pity for those who are to be to-day the advocates of the degradation and provincialism of their native land. I unfeignedly pity those who are this day to tell me that the Irish, of all the people of the earth, are unfit for self-government; or to tell me that there is something so mean, low, and despicable in the Irish character, that we are unfit to do, what every other nation on the face of the earth is fit to do—namely, to govern ourselves. (Hear.)

“I was not here when the house met on the last day, but I saw through the medium of the newspapers that something had been said that there was an implicit understanding before your election, my Lord, that we were not to discuss political subjects during your year of office. (Hear, from Tory members.) I utterly deny it. (Cheers from the Liberal members.) There was no such understanding, and those who cheered were the first to introduce political topics here. (Hear, from the Liberal members.) Did they not introduce an address to Earl de Grey, and divide on it? (Cries of, They did.) Did they not introduce a discussion

on the wars in China and Affghanistan? Did they not begin their rambles in Ireland, and go to the borders of Pekin, to find political subjects for discussion in this room, and by this assembly? And after all this I hear a cheer from the very gentlemen who introduced political subjects here, signifying, if that cheer means anything, that political subjects were prohibited; I, however, defy contradiction, when I emphatically say there was no treaty—no compact—express or implied, to forbear the discussion of political subjects in this assembly. (Cheers.) *Would* I—could I enter into such a treaty?—I, who boasted in the House of Commons that the Corporations of Ireland would be Normal schools for peaceful agitation, a sentence taken up against me—when I proclaimed that one of my great objects in seeking for a Reform of the Corporations was, that Irishmen of all parties might meet together and discuss those questions deliberately, openly, and manfully. (Hear, hear.) Let it also be recollected that from that chair I proclaimed the same thing. (Hear.) I said, no person should know my politics by my judicial conduct as Lord Mayor—but still that I was a Repealer. (Cheers.) Implication there was none

—I would scorn to be a party to any such implication; if indeed one word had been said of any such agreement, I should have loudly and indignantly disclaimed it, as I disclaim it now. (Hear.) Why, the former Corporation petitioned upon every political subject. (Hear.) There is not one that they did not petition on. For a Repeal of the Union, they petitioned three times. (Hear.) And on another question that I took a deep interest in, they petitioned, I suppose, fifty times. (Hear.) It may be said, that it was a bad example to follow; their bad examples I would not follow, but I would follow their good examples. (Hear.) The Parliament has taken care to restrain us within very narrow limits in our conduct as a corporate body, and we should not add further degradation to that by restraining ourselves from the expression of political sentiments. (Hear.) I say, then, what is good in the old Corporation imitate, and that is, the attention they paid to political affairs, and which was only bad so far as they directed their political exertions to party purposes. I disclaim all party purposes—I heartily condemn them as ludicrous, as well as unwise. (Hear, hear, and cheers.)

“Indeed, another thing struck me; while I was absent the hon. and learned Alderman challenged me in terms consistent with that courtesy which he never violates, to a discussion of the question of Repeal; yet now judge my astonishment when I find he who so emphatically challenged this discussion, has now given notice of an amendment to my Repeal resolution, condemning in express terms all discussion on that subject. (Laughter and cheers.)

“However, I am glad he is here to discuss the question; and now I am ready to discuss it with him, and to address the observations I have to make to this assemblage, representing as it does the city of Dublin,—a city which has suffered such master grievances by the Union, that it would be impossible, I take it, that there should not be a majority of her Representatives in favour of the petition. (Hear, hear.) It is not to convince those who are by my side, whom experience has already convinced by the irresistible evidence of their senses—of their feelings—of the destruction of their property—that I address you. No; I stand here to argue with those out of this room, who are ignorant of,

and many of whom are adverse to our rights. I, from this spot, address my arguments to the entire Irish nation—to the British people—to the civilized world—where this discussion will be carried on the wings of the press. I stand here to discuss the question in an assembly of Irish Representatives, where I cannot be cried down; and where, however unwilling gentlemen may be to waste their time in listening to a subject on which we differ, I am sure, at least, to receive courtesy, (hear, hear,) and that attention will be paid to the arguments proving the value to Ireland of those measures which I propose. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) In another assembly I addressed before, I was foolish enough to take the line of argument, showing Ireland would be rendered prosperous by Repeal; but I might as well have addressed the deaf adder. (Hear.) If I showed that England would be rendered prosperous by it, I would, no doubt, have had a majority; but as surely as it followed that it would be of value to Ireland, that was a decided reason for there being a majority against me. (Hear.)

“I will now tell the hon. and learned gentle-

man the propositions I mean to establish. I am here to assert these nine propositions :—

“First. The capability and capacity of the Irish nation for an independent Legislature.

“Secondly. The perfect right of Ireland to have a domestic Parliament.

“Thirdly. That that right was fully established by the transactions of 1782.

“Fourthly. That the most beneficial effects to Ireland resulted from her parliamentary independence.

“Fifthly. The utter incompetence of the Irish Parliament to annihilate the Irish constitution by the Union.

“Sixthly. That the Union was no contract or bargain; that it was carried by the greatest corruption and bribery, added to force, fraud and terror.

“Seventhly. That the Union produced the most disastrous results to Ireland.

“Eighthly. That the Union can be abolished by peaceable and constitutional means, without the violation of law, and without the destruction of property or life.

“Ninthly. That the most salutary results, and

none other, must arise from a Repeal of the Union.

“These are the nine propositions, which I came here to-day to demonstrate,—I say to demonstrate, not as relying on any intellectual power of mine, or any force of talent; but from the truth and plainness of the propositions themselves. (Cheers.)”

CHAPTER VII.

REPEAL DISCUSSION.—PUBLIC MEETINGS, WITH STATEMENT OF THE NUMBERS ATTENDING THEM.—STATE TRIALS.—MONSTER INDICTMENT. RUMOURS OF PERILS.—ALARM ON THE ROAD.—AMOUNT OF MILES TRAVELLED.—POPULARITY OF MR. O'CONNELL.—PEACEABLE AGITATION.—THE MAIL CONTRACTS.—BUILDING OF CONCILIATION HALL.—DANNYBROOK FAIR.—THE MEETING.—FATHER DE SMET.—EXERTIONS OF MR. O'CONNELL.

THE length of the extracts from the “REPEAL” debate in the Corporation of Dublin, with which the preceding chapter has terminated, may well be excused in a record of “Agitation” Experiences, from the interest that in Ireland has attached even down to the present day to the “first move” in the great game that was played in 1843; and that would have succeeded in that year, had there not been disastrous interferences with its plan, on the part of the subordinate players at the popular side.

From the occurrence of this debate may, indeed, be dated the commencement of the great

popular movement of the year 1843. It operated like the connecting of the wires in a voltaic battery ; all parts of the country seeming to receive the fiery impulse at the same moment. Indifference, apathy, and suspicion, and all that had hitherto appeared to oppose a sullen, impenetrable barrier to the advance and spread of agitation, were flung to the winds ; and nearly the whole of Ireland displayed for the time an unprecedented and earnest unity of sentiment and of action. Alas ! how changed are matters now.

“’Tis long to tell and sad to trace
Each step from splendour to disgrace :—
Enough : no foreign foe could quell
Our souls ;—till from *ourselves* we fell !
Yes !—*our divisions* paved the way
To villain bonds and despot-sway !”

There is much reason in rhyme sometimes ; and never were there more reason and applicability than in those lines of Byron, as applied to the unhappy state of things in Ireland.

Never were hopes brighter—never more fair-seeming, than were ours during several months of that, *to us*, eventful year 1843. It is vain now to calculate what might have been, under other circumstances than those of the paltry counter-

working and under-working of some of those who loudest urged their claims to popular confidence, the result of the great movement of that year. This much may be said with confidence, that had not advantages been given to the enemy by the intrusive indiscretions—to use the mildest phrase—of parties to whom it is now worse than useless more particularly to refer, it was quite *impossible* that such a demonstration of the will of a united people, so calm, so grand, so majestic in its peacefulness even more than in its vastness and almost universality, *could* have failed of making impression on the councils of the empire, and compelling attention to the demands of the Irish nation.

But it is idle—most utterly vain and idle—to speculate on what *might* have been. The past is past; the dismal present, and the doubtful and threatening future, require all the thought that we can give to them; and we can but cast a glance behind, to renew and refresh the bitter but wholesome lessons of experience, that may save us from a repetition of disaster, if ever there shall be again a repetition of popular effort.

The following lists of the chief public meetings for “REPEAL” that were held during the course of

the year 1843, are copied from the “MONSTER INDICTMENT” and “Bill of Particulars,” as exhibited at the noted “State-Trials” of the end of that and beginning of the succeeding year.

DATES.	PLACES.	NUMBERS ATTENDING.
19 March, 1843	Trim	30,000
14 May, „ . .	Mullingar . . .	100,000
21 May, „ . .	Cork	500,000
28 May, „ . .	Longford . . .	200,000
5 June, „ . .	Drogheda . . .	200,000
8 June, „ . .	Kilkenny . . .	300,000
11 June, „ . .	Mallow	400,000
29 June, „ . .	Dundalk . . .	300,000
3 July, „ . .	Donnybrook . .	200,000
6 August, „ . .	Ballinglass . .	300,000
15 August, „ . .	Clontibret . . .	30,000
15 August, „ . .	Tara	800,000
10 September „ . .	Loughrea . . .	100,000
17 September „ . .	Clifden	50,000
24 September „ . .	Lismore	100,000
1 October, „ . .	Mullaghmast . .	100,000
		<hr/>
		Total 3,710,000

19 April, 1843	Limerick.	Numbers attending not stated in Indictment, but they were all <i>vast</i> meetings.
4 May, „ . .	Sligo.	
18 May, „ . .	Charleville.	
23 May, „ . .	Cashel.	
15 June, „ . .	Ennis.	
18 June, „ . .	Athlone.	
22 June, „ . .	Skibbereen.	
29 June, „ . .	Galway.	
16 July, „ . .	Tullamore.	
24 July, „ . .	Tuam.	
13 August, „ . .	Maryborough.	
20 August, „ . .	Roscommon.	

There is no doubt whatever that the numbers here set down as those of the attendances at the various meetings, were very much under the reality. They were stated high enough for the purposes of the trial; but even to make a point in that trumped-up and heterogeneous proceeding, the paltry Government of the day did not consider it advisable or prudent to allow the real amount of the multitudes who attended the great demonstrations in question, to be put upon legal and official record.

And those mighty assemblages were so peaceable, so orderly! Not a blow struck—not an offensive word spoken! Every one cheerful, good-humoured, disposed to convenience each other, kind and careful to the women and little children mixed up in the crowd; and each and all burning with ardour and the most earnest enthusiasm in the cause.

It is right, however, for the sake of the credit of the prosecution, and of Sir Robert Peel's government that instituted it, to say, that there *were* two facts of awful importance established against the MONSTER MEETINGS, by the Government witnesses at the trial. It was irreversibly

proved on the most authentic and carefully prepared testimony, that at the great meeting at Longford, on the 28th. of May, 1843, the people had actually and most irreverently *laughed* at a drunken Orange policeman! And again, at another of the meetings, said to have been that at Athlone, on the *eighteenth of June*, the very anniversary day of the *battle of Waterloo*, a gingerbread stall was upset by the pressure of the crowd, and its contents trampled under foot!

It may fairly be said that at least one-third should be added to the Government calculations in the foregoing lists, in order to get at something approaching the truth with regard to the actual numbers that attended the meetings in question. I was present at seven of those of which the numbers are given, viz. Trim, Drogheda, Kilkenny, Dundalk, Donnybrook, Tara, and Mullaghmast, and can certainly say, that the estimate for those meetings was much below the fact; especially as regards Trim, Tara, and Mullaghmast.

From the Trim meeting, which took place in that town, on Sunday the 19th of March, we went on to a meeting next day at Carrickmacross, in the county of Monaghan. All sorts of reports had

been in circulation for several days, indeed for weeks previous, as to the intentions of the County Monaghan and County Cavan Orangemen to attack my father's carriage on the road, either going or returning, such was said to be their indignation at his carrying his agitating campaign so near to their strongholds in the North. Friends insisted on our carrying arms with us to repel the rumoured assaults—and armed accordingly we went; but happily had not the least necessity for using them. As we approached the County Monaghan, indeed, we were in a manner dogged by a well-dressed, well-mounted, farmer-like young man, who would occasionally quicken his horse's pace so as to get alongside the carriage windows, and survey closely the inside where my father and I were seated; but after thus accompanying us for several miles, and several times repeating the same manœuvre, in perfect silence all the time, he left us; and, I think, I heard afterwards, that his motive had been simple curiosity. Had it been otherwise, there was not much to fear from his single arm, as besides pistols within our reach in each of the pockets of the carriage, poor Tom Steele, and the servant outside, were armed.

After a good meeting, a little way from the town of Carrickmacross, we had a public dinner in an extensive store in the town itself. Leaving it late at night, we had to drive a distance of two or three miles, to the house of a gentleman who resided in the neighbourhood, and who had insisted upon our whole party taking up their quarters with him. In this drive an instance occurred of the slight chances that may sometimes cause the most deplorable events. The stories that I have alluded to, as having been so industriously propagated, of the warlike intentions of the Orangemen, being rather strengthened than otherwise by some of the accounts we had received on our route, poor Tom Steele and I, as we ascended the front box of the carriage for the nocturnal drive, took care to provide ourselves with some of the arms. It so happened, that just as we got about half-way between the town and the gates of our hospitable friend, and as the carriage was rolling smoothly and noiselessly down into a deep hollow of the road, where the trees from either side completely overhung, and excluded the faint light of the stars, leaving us in nearly total darkness, we were suddenly saluted with a hoarse shout from

the pathway at the side. Then there was a rush, and by the light of the carriage lamp we could dimly discern a figure crossing in front of the horses, as if about to seize the reins and stop them. Steele's fingers and mine were simultaneously on the triggers of our respective weapons, when the man suddenly reeled away again from the middle of the road, and staggering back, fell in upon the pathway. We found that it was a drunken wretch, returning from the bonfire and other rejoicings in the town, who had thus narrowly escaped two forms of death.

It will be seen by the lists already given, that my father attended three country meetings in the month of March of the year 1843; one in April, six in May, nine in June, three in July, five in August, three in September, and one in October; making in all thirty-one. Besides these there were some minor meetings, which the journeymen getters-up of the *monster prosecution* did not think worthy of special note in the indictment. And besides all these there were the thirteen meetings of the Association, specially set down in the second list, to say nothing of the many other meetings of the same body which he attended in the course

of the nine months embraced by the indictment; and in further addition there were the meetings of the new Corporation of Dublin, then but a year in office, and much requiring and *obtaining* his presence and active participation in their affairs.

Taking all these into account, and making yet *another addition still* for casual meetings for charitable or other special purposes where he attended, some estimate may be formed of the amount of labour which my father underwent in the nine months in question. On all these occasions he had of course to make speeches, and people were not satisfied without a *long* speech from *him*. And as there was in almost every case of a country meeting a public dinner afterwards, he had most commonly to make two, and sometimes *three* speeches.

The amount of *travelling*, the number of miles weekly gone over, is an item not to be neglected. The following will be something like an approximation to the fact, counting the *double* and *cross* journeys:—

Trim and Carrickmacross . . .	100 miles (statute).
Limerick	238 „
Sligo	270 „
Carried forward . .	<u>608</u>

Brought forward	608 miles (statute)	
Mullingar	96	„
Charleville	292	„
Cork	320	„
Cashel	216	„
Longford	146	„
Drogheda	56	„
Kilkenny	144	„
Mallow	294	„
Ennis	284	„
Athlone	152	„
Skibbereen	424	„
Dundalk	100	„
Galway	266	„
Donnybrook { (in the suburbs of the city of Dublin).		
Tullamore	126	„
Tuam	252	„
Baltinglass	74	„
Clontibret { (Mr. O'Connell did not attend this meeting).		
Tara	44	„
Maryborough	100	„
Roscommon	190	„
Loughrea	218	„
Clifden	356	„
Lismore	280	„
Mullaghmast	66	„
Total	5,104	

This total, instead of being *beyond*, is really *below* the mark, as he frequently turned from the nearest road to or from the places which he visited, either to attend chance gatherings, or for some other purpose connected with the agitation.

Clontibret was the meeting which brought the

name of the Rev. Mr. Tierney, P.P. of that parish, into the indictment at the monster trial of 1844. It is in the County Monaghan, and was attended on behalf of the Association by Mr. O'Neill Daunt. At this meeting, which was not properly one of the "monster" assemblages, the only disaster occurred that marked the whole course of the popular movement in 1843. An unfortunate man was stabbed, it is said, by one of the police, if not by one of the armed mob whom some magistrates of ultra Orange principles encouraged to go into the town, to watch the "agitating *Papists*."

It is impossible to describe the enthusiastic nature of the excitement among the people as these meetings went on. At any moment that Mr. O'Connell had chosen during that year, and, indeed, for long afterwards, he could have raised them in insurrection, as one man, throughout the entire country; and however bloody, wasting, and desolating might have been the struggle, it is utterly impossible but that the result would have been a violent separation from England. There was a spirit abroad amongst the people, which would have made millions among them to prefer death to submission again to England; and the

whole force which the latter could by any possibility have poured into Ireland, strengthened even as it might be by arming the comparatively few of the population who were hostile to their fellow-countrymen, would have been unavailing, against an insurrection in which not only the general mass of the country would have been engaged, but in which each parish, each *hamlet*, would have stoutly borne its part.

This, however, was not my father's object, purpose, or desire. The peace-policy, which has of late times been so much sneered at and reflected upon, was with him no empty profession, no passing abstraction, but a deep conviction, and one to which he was immovably attached. Reason and religion alike made him look to it, *and to it alone*, as a means for the regeneration of Ireland. And the experience of history, especially of the history of times within his personal ken, in foreign countries as well as in Ireland, warned him from the opposite policy, as one which, unsuccessful, ever produced a worse state of things than previously existed; and, if successful, seldom eventuated in effecting any stable results of good. It is needless to add, that the almost recent occurrence that crowned his peaceful agitation in the year

1829, was potent in confirming his adherence to the principles on which that agitation had been conducted to its successful issue.

The “getting up of the *steam*” among the people was indexed in 1843, as it had been in the year preceding Catholic Emancipation, by the rapid though gradual increase of the contributions to the Repeal rent. During 1842 it had seldom risen beyond 100*l.* and rarely attained even to that amount. At the beginning of 1843, it made what was thought a great jump to 150*l.*; but from the period of the Repeal discussion in the Corporation, followed as it was, and imitated by similar discussions in nearly all the other leading municipal bodies throughout Ireland, the weekly Repeal subscriptions took almost a geometrical rate of increase; until at one period during the height of the excitement, nearly 14,000*l.* was received in one short month.

As if the Government had been of opinion that there were not sufficient causes of excitement at work, they, with singular *maladroitness*, contrived to *bungle* an affair of “mail-coach contracts,” in a manner that supplied for the time a fertile source of indignant oratory to the smaller fry, the tritons of the minnows of agitation in Dublin.

The matter took a ludicrous aspect from the extreme heroism of patriotic indignation assumed by the partizans of the individual particularly aggrieved, as contrasted with the manner in which both he and they had used every previous opportunity of coming before the public to cry out against *nationality*, and to chant the praises of the Union and of English management.

Still, notwithstanding the ludicrous feature thus given to it, there was a substantial grievance at bottom. The gentleman in question, the late most respectable Mr. Purcell, had had the mail-coach contract for several years, and had given every satisfaction both to the authorities and to the public; as well as rendered a great service to the poor operatives of Dublin, by giving them considerable employment in his establishment.

When the usual period came round for renewing the contract he sent in his tender as before, and found that he had one competitor, a Scotch gentleman, of the euphonious and classical name of *Croal*. The rest of the history depends on the uncontradicted and repeated statements of Mr. Purcell's friends; and not even an explanation was ever vouchsafed by the Government, or any

one upon their part. Mr. Croal was allowed to *amend* his tender; which, on being *thus* brought below that of Mr. Purcell, was accepted by the Post-office authorities; and Mr. Purcell, although his tender had been under his competitor's first offer, and although he had a right to equal notice with Mr. Croal, if only on account of the satisfaction he had given in the execution up to that time of the contracts in his hands, was informed that his tender was rejected, and a direct refusal was given to his application to be allowed the same advantage as given in the other case—namely, that of amending the terms that were considered too high.

As the means of the Repeal Association increased, and the old *Agitation-room* (the "*Great-room*," as it was called, of the Corn Exchange buildings) became each meeting-day more and more thronged, until at length the passages outside and the staircases were crowded, and hundreds had to go away disappointed, our Committee began to conceive the idea of building a new place of meeting. With some difficulty, and not a little manœuvring, to conceal the purpose for which the ground was sought, the space now occupied by

Conciliation Hall was taken on lease from a respectable trader of very anti-repeal politics; and a Special Committee appointed to decide on the nature of the building there to be erected. It may be said in passing, that, ardent as was the patriotism of several of our young lovers of the arts on this Committee, there was a very prudent indisposition to involve themselves at all, by lease or agreement, either with the owner of the ground or the architect of the building; and but for my father's taking these responsibilities upon himself, Conciliation Hall would not have seen the light.

At first, our funds being moderate, the new building was to be but a mere shell, without height, or extent of any kind beyond what might allow between seven and eight hundred persons to attend our meetings. The old room was overcrowded with less than half that number.

As our funds rapidly increased, so did our ideas grow; and it was ordained at successive sittings of the Committee, with little interval between them, first, that the original plan of the new building should be enlarged so as to accommodate twelve hundred persons—then fifteen hundred—two thousand; and, finally, as many as the ground-

area would permit; namely, between four and five thousand persons.

Not less than the latter number were certainly in the Hall—crowded and *screwed in* one way or other—when the building was finally opened for the meetings of the Association, somewhere about the end of the month of October.

There was no attempt or pretence at architectural beauty either inside or out; if we except the not very successful Roman-cement work on the quay front. It is but justice to the builder, a most excellent, respectable and skilful individual, Mr. Peter Martin, to say, that he never professed, or assumed to be an architect; and that the quay front was meant to be merely temporary, and to give place to one of correct design in more permanent material. His own part he discharged most satisfactorily, in giving us a sound, strong, well-built, and most convenient meeting-place; decidedly the best for hearing that is in Dublin, and, I believe, in any town of the three kingdoms, and at a cost that left him very little profit indeed, after paying for the excellent materials that he supplied, and the quantity of labour to which he gave employment.

The "Donnybrook" Meeting—the only "monster" that took place in the county of Dublin, occurred on the 3d of July. The locality was the celebrated Fair-green, often told of in story and in song, especially in that most outrageous cockney attempt at Irish humour, the doggrel beginning with—

"Whoe'er has the luck to see Donnybrook Fair,
An Irishman *all in his glory* is there,
With his sprig of shillelagh and shamrock so green."

The man must be very green indeed, greener than the shamrock itself, that would consider the Irish people represented by the *gamins* and off-scourings of a city, such as form the staple of the attendance at Donnybrook fair. As for the *sprig* of shillelagh, the expression is so redolent of Cockney-land, as in itself to condemn the song, and induce an ardent wish, that its author, and all who sing or say it, were within the reach and under the infliction of the shillelagh itself.

A very certain and irrefragable proof of the degrading effect of our provincial position, is given by the readiness with which Irishmen laugh at and applaud every ridiculous representation of Irish national character, whether in song, story,

or in print. Mr. O'Connell used to say that we are the only nation in the world that seem to enjoy, and take a kind of pride in being made subjects of mockery and buffoon ridicule. A squeamishness, or captiousness, about an occasional jest, would not indeed be creditable; but most *un-credible* is the constant habit—constant, at least, among the more educated classes in Ireland—of chiming in with and fawning upon every scurrile jester, in England or Scotland, that chooses to launch his pointless arrow at us.

It is but justice to say, that although drawn, as the attendances at this noted fair have always been, from the very dregs of the population of a great city, the effects of Father Mathew's beneficent counsels have been very evident among them upon all the recent celebrations of the Donnybrook saturnalia; and that not only has drunkenness greatly diminished, but outrage is almost unknown.

On the occasion of the Repeal Meeting to be held on *the Green*, as it is commonly designated by the Dublin "carmen," the "trades" of Dublin mustered in great force; each under their several banners, bearing the highly painted and gilded

insignia of their respective "crafts and mysteries." They passed, in a sort of review, before my father's house in Merrion Square, and some idea may be formed of their numbers, when it is mentioned that, although they marched four, and in some cases five abreast, they took two hours in passing. An enormous crowd lined two sides of the square while they were passing; and the effect was striking of all the banners, some really very tastefully, and all very richly decorated, together with the various coloured ribands streaming from the long white wands borne by every man in the ranks. Bands of music attended them, and the chief men amongst them paraded on horseback.

The quotations I have made from my journal, naturally appear trite and jejune to others as well as to myself at this moment. But it has been well said, that if the most indifferent observer narrated, in the commonest language, the impressions of the moment, they could not fail to have, after the lapse of years, some interest attached to them when read by others. The diary of Pepys, with all its frivolities and minutiae, and perhaps by reason of these very minutiae, is a striking instance of the truth of this saying. But Pepys had the

advantage of *coming down to posterity*; whereas most modern journals and diaries are likely to be subject to the same misfortune that (to use Sir Walter Scott's notice of the disaster,) attended the Frenchman's appeal to posterity—namely, the misfortune of never reaching their address.

With regard to the Donnybrook Repeal meeting, I find set down the following :—

“ *Monday, July 10, 1843.*—Last Monday our ‘Dublin Trades’ made a magnificent demonstration at Donnybrook. They were two hours in passing in review before my father’s house, with bands and splendid banners. My father, accompanied by four or five, of whom I was one, fell into the procession after the Trades, and we proceeded to Donnybrook, through Fitzwilliam Street, Upper Leeson Street, &c. We were escorted by thousands upon thousands before, behind, at either side of the road, and in the fields, as we went along. While yet among the streets it was amusing to remark the Tory houses along the line shut up—blinds drawn down in the parlour and drawing-room windows; but their owners *peeping from the bed-rooms*. In the *Liberal* houses, every window was crowded—ladies waving hand-

kerchiefs and throwing out flowers, gentlemen cheering, &c. &c. There were green arches across the road, at three or four points, with patriotic mottoes printed on large sheets of parchment.

“The Meeting itself was a magnificent sight, and went off admirably. The trades stationed themselves in most picturesque groups about the platform. One valiant hero, in *a tin breast-plate* and helmet, with a battle-axe of the same material, stationed himself nearly in front, and rather discomposed our gravity occasionally. I did not hear what particular handicraft he belonged to, and was the representative of.

“A most impressive spectacle was the dispersion of the immense assemblage after the meeting had concluded. Each ‘trade’ moved off the ground in a dense but well-ordered phalanx, preceded by a band, and looking exactly like so many regiments marching from a review ground.”

At the meeting were two persons to whom the scene had a peculiar interest—to one of them especially, who was little accustomed to the ways and habits of civilized man. They were the Right Rev. Doctor Hughes, Roman Catholic Bishop of New York, and the Reverend Father

De Smet, a Belgian by birth, and then, as at present, a Jesuit Missionary to the wild tribes of the Oregon territory in North America.

Both these reverend and most estimable personages had come a little out of their way, (on their return from a short visit to Europe,) to visit Daniel O'Connell; and by a chance had come in for a "MONSTER" Meeting. Dr. Hughes, an Irishman by birth, and in *heart and soul*, did not find the scene strange as did his reverend companion; for he had witnessed some of the earlier struggles for Catholic Emancipation. Still, even to him it was evidently and naturally of great interest. But to the Belgian clergyman it was altogether a novelty, of which he had not formed any previous conception; and most utterly differing from the scenes in which had hitherto lain the ordinary track of his life, and amidst which he has since been labouring, even up to the moment at which I write.

The Catholic publication, entitled the "Annals of the Propagation of the Faith," has given most interesting details of the great labours, wild and strange adventures, and extraordinary success of this devoted and admirable missionary,—a true

son of the noble Order of Ignatius of Loyola,—among the poor heathens of the far west. He seems to have acquired influence almost unbounded with them—the just and natural result of his generous and most unreserved self-devotion to their spiritual necessities; and also not a little the result of the sage and useful counsels he has given them in their necessities of a corporeal and temporal nature. The accounts of his successes—modest and unaffected in tone, as entirely unexaggerated and unimpeachable in their substance—recall vividly to mind the history of the achievements of the illustrious fathers of his order, who introduced religion and civilization into Paraguay.

Let us hope that the similarity will not reach so far as that the good fruit he has produced among the children of the wilds in Northern America, will be similarly crushed and destroyed by the violence and reckless passions of what are called civilized men!

His personal appearance is well suited to his sacred calling. There is a mild dignity blended with high intelligence, and at the same time with a most evident and beaming benevolence, in his aspect, that at once attracts, captivates, and at the

same time impresses with an involuntary, and even an admiring respect.

The almost constant travelling, and the accompanying labour and excitement of making speeches, receiving deputations, undergoing public receptions, interviews, &c. &c. at every point of his journeyings, during so many successive months, gave, in the opinion of those who had the best means of observing my father, the first serious shock to his hitherto unbroken constitution. It was hopeless, however, to dream of remonstrating with him, so bent was he upon pushing to the uttermost the great opportunity for Ireland that appeared to be given him by the awakening, as it were, of the Irish public mind in the year 1843, after a comparative inaction of nearly fourteen years—that is, from the period of carrying Emancipation. And there is no doubt at any rate of this, that his health suffered most severely from his being compelled to witness the utter loss to Ireland, and total wasting of the great opportunity of that year: partly by reason of the unworthy and most disastrous holding off from the popular cause of the bulk of the richer classes, and partly by the madness of a section of

the Repealers themselves—that same madness which, at a still more recent period, has again crossed the fortunes, and given fresh intensity to the degradation of Ireland.

But Mr. O'Connell would not admit, even to himself, that he felt any injurious consequences from his exertions, extraordinary and continuous though they were. And certainly it was very difficult for those to avoid acquiescing at least for the time in his opinion, who had opportunities of watching him during his frequent progresses. It was hard to realize to the mind the idea of danger, when looking at him during those exciting scenes and times,—joyous, high spirited and exulting, as he addressed the delighted multitudes that surrounded the platforms of the country meetings, and told them of the ancient glories of Old Ireland—of all her beauties, and the noble gifts with which she has been endowed by nature; and of the bright hopes that it was in the power of her children to make still brighter realities for her and for themselves, did they but resolve to be up and doing.

And then all remnant of gloomy forebodings that might have survived his speech was sure to be lost and dissipated in air, by the wild, ring-

ing, far-reaching cheer, that, bursting as it were from the inmost souls of his auditors, gave back at once an echo and an answer to the patriotic invocation.

Who that witnessed and shared in those high and transporting excitements, could have thought that the rashness and madness of a few was destined to blast the hopes, and render fruitless the labours and the deep and ardent devotion of the many ; and that ere the lapse of four short years, he who spoke would have died a broken-hearted wanderer in a foreign land ; and they who listened and responded to his words, would be perishing by thousands under the combined agencies of pestilence and famine !

CHAPTER VIII.

MR. WILLIAM CONNOR.—ENTRÉE OF MR. JAMES GORDON BENNETT.—
“GREAT ROOM” OF THE CORN EXCHANGE.—MR. BENNETT’S EXIT.—
REV. TRESHAM GREGG.—THE COAL PORTERS.—GREAT MEETING AT
TARA HILL.—LEDRU ROLLIN.—RETURN HOME.—MR. O’CONNELL’S
EXERTIONS AND ENCOURAGEMENTS.

DURING one of the meetings of the Repeal Association in this year—sometime about the month of May—we had a scene which, if the members of that body had indeed the evil designs so liberally imputed to them by their opponents, would have afforded a great opportunity for making a demonstration of them. And unquestionably the report of it would have made a conspicuous figure in the “Monster Indictment” of the succeeding autumn; along with those of the meetings of the Association, or of country Repealers, actually noted in that formidable document.

The grievance of “insecurity of tenure,” with all its disastrous consequences to the industry and

welfare of the country, and the profits of all connected with the land in Ireland, had been a constant theme of our discussions in the Repeal Association from its beginning; and a thousand different suggestions and propositions had been brought forward from time to time, for the equitable settlement of this most difficult subject. A Committee of the Association, specially appointed for the purpose, was holding its sittings to consider and report upon these various plans; and it was their published advertisement, inviting communications from all who conceived themselves competent to shape out a measure of relief or remedy, that brought upon us the visitation I am about to allude to.

My father was absent from town upon the day in question, having to attend one of the great country meetings many miles away. We had just entered upon the ordinary routine of our business, after reading and confirming the minutes, and some short speeches had been made, and remittances handed in, when it was announced to us that Mr. William Connor, who had become known by his public letters on the landlord and tenant question, in the Repeal newspapers, was

outside, and was desirous of being admitted, in order to have an opportunity of laying before the Association, and before the country, *his* particular nostrum for a full, final, and, to all parties, satisfactory arrangement.

He was of course admitted without delay “to the honours of the sitting,” as our French neighbours phrase it; and got a few cheers on entering by way of an advance on the security of his grand promised plan to take us out of the difficulty in which we were, of satisfying the impatience of the rural districts, and their appeals to us at headquarters, for the shaping out of a measure that would remove the heavy grievance of which they complained.

He commenced his speech with a proposition that no one was inclined to contest or deny. It was something as follows:—

“Mr. Chairman: I am of opinion that the simpler the remedy can be that shall be applied to the distracted state of the relations between landlord and tenant in Ireland, the better for all parties.”

So far there was general agreement; and Peel himself was never more vociferously cheered in

the House of Commons for the dignified enunciation of a truism, than was Mr. William Connor on proclaiming this not very contestable axiom in the Loyal National Repeal Association.

But Mr. Connor was not a man to stop at theories and general propositions. He had a practical idea in his head, and was "short, sharp, and decisive" in unfolding it.

"For this end, Sir," continued he, "the best thing that can or ought to be done is, to recognise by law a right of ownership in his land, for each tenant or small landholder at present in possession. And until the legislature shall have passed a law for this purpose, it is my opinion that we should exhort and instruct the people of Ireland to *pay neither rent, county cess, poor rate, nor taxes!!!*"

We had quite enough of our volunteer instructor; and got rid of him with all possible despatch; and neither he, nor any of his plans, treatises, or pamphlets, were ever allowed afterwards to come within our doors.

A similar repulse was encountered by another worthy a few weeks earlier or later than that

administered to the great projector of "simple" remedies just mentioned.

Mr. James Gordon Bennett, of undesirable notoriety, printer and "publiciste" of New York, proprietor of the New York Herald newspaper, a fruitful repertory, according to all accounts, of calumnies, personal attacks of all kinds, and scurrility of the most shameless description, had the powers of face to present himself for admission to one of the meetings of the Repeal Association at which my father personally attended.

The card of this "distinguished stranger" was handed in to Mr. O'Connell, accompanied by the information that it was that of "*an American gentleman*" desirous of witnessing the proceedings of the great popular Association of Ireland, and making the personal acquaintance of its founder and originator. Not looking with sufficient attention at the name, or in the hurry of the interruption not at once recollecting what he had heard respecting the individual who bore it, Mr. O'Connell desired him to be conducted in at once. To understand the dramatic effect of *the short* scene that followed, it is necessary to premise with a short description of the manner in which admission

to the reserved seats near the chairman, and therefore the posts of honour, was arranged.

The old "Great Room" of the Corn Exchange Buildings is an oblong quadrangle, entered by three doors, two of them at either corner of one of the smaller sides of the quadrangle; and the third a large folding door in the centre of the other and opposite smaller side. This latter door, however, which opened upon a great staircase, leading down to the corn merchants' hall on the ground-floor, was not only entirely unused by the Association, but was, in fact, barred by a *mountain* of benches, rising from the floor to within a few feet of the ceiling, and destined, of course, for the accommodation of parties attending the meetings. Of the two other doors at the other end, one (the larger of the two) was appropriated for the admission of the general crowd of the auditory; the other (a small narrow closet-like door, leading from the Committee and office rooms,) was reserved for the entry of the chief members, members of the Committee, the usual speakers, strangers, and reporters of the press.

As the Chair stood rather more than two-thirds up the room, and away from the entrance doors,

the use of this small private door would have been little, if some kind of private passage were not also managed, whereby the *privileged* could get to their seats, without having to struggle through the crowd of the general attendants at the meetings. This was accomplished by giving them admission under the tiers of side benches, which rose in a similar manner and for a similar purpose as the end benches before mentioned, from the floor to a good height on the side walls. A party entering, then, through the little door in question, advanced along the wall of the room fully two-thirds of its length without being seen at all; his way leading him, as has been described, under the side benches, the backs of which were all carefully boarded up, to prevent any of the sitters on them from dropping down into the passage below. Arrived so far, a sharp turn brought the party out into view, close by the seat of the chairman; when, if it was a stranger, or any one to whom the leaders of that body wished to show a particular mark of attention, he was invited to cross the reporter's table, (that occupied the space between the side benches, for about fifteen feet of the floor of the room, in a direct line

from the Chair,) and to seat himself near Mr. O'Connell.

Poor Gordon Bennett had "advanced thus far into the enemy's country;" had mounted the reporter's table, full in the sight of the whole meeting, and had not as yet descended from his most conspicuous position; when, unfortunately for him, a friend, who had been for some time resident in New York, and, perhaps, had personally suffered from the assaults of the Herald, whispered a few words in Mr. O'Connell's ear that at once brought to his recollection all that he had heard respecting that newspaper and its proprietor. At once the "*American gentleman's*" card was thrown back to him, and a vehement disclaimer uttered of any wish or disposition to make his acquaintance, or be graced with his presence. Mr. Bennett, confounded and dismayed, turned in his tracks, and jumping off the table, disappeared back again through the covered passage; pursued by a hearty groan from the auditory, to whom his offences had been told in a few, not very ambiguous words. Of course, he took his revenge afterwards in the columns of his newspaper, both upon the Association and upon its leader; and of course, also, his

having done so gave neither Mr. O'Connell, nor any one of the members of the Association, the slightest possible concern.

It is but fair towards the Americans to say, that Gordon Bennett is by no means an indigenous product of their soil, but an importation from Scotland. They would, however, have more right to such an explanation if they did not give the encouragement, which all writers, even their own Cooper, declare to be given in their cities to such men, whether natives or foreigners.

The Repeal Association not only rejected individuals whose conduct appeared to merit public reprehension, but it also repudiated and rejected all assistance in its efforts on the part of bodies of men, who were known to be adverse, or to have done anything contrary to the great principles of the liberty of mankind in any part of the world. Thus, at a time, and at more than one time, when the finances of the body were at a low ebb, and money was wanting to sustain the operation of its machinery, or give protection to poor men in various parts of Ireland, suffering under the many and grievous forms of landlord and magisterial oppression, sums of money,

amounting to hundreds of pounds, have been promptly and decisively rejected, and returned by the first post to their donors in New Orleans and other slave-holding cities of America, for the sole, but amply sufficient reason, that these contributions came tainted with the plague-spot of the advocacy and sustainment of the accursed system of negro-slavery.

In this, however, the Repeal Association only imitated and repeated the conduct of the Catholic Association, upon the occurrence of similar occasions during the existence of the latter body.

The mention of the entrance of strangers and visitors into the place of meeting of the Repeal Association, brings to mind two doughty achievements of the *locally-famed* Reverend Tresham Gregg; whilome chaplain and father-confessor to the "Orange," or "Brunswick," or "Conservative-Registry and Protestant Operative Association," of the city of Dublin.

Never physical-force Chartist laboured more zealously and inveterately to disturb and nullify the proceedings of meetings in England for rational and peaceful Reform, than did this reverend individual exert himself on all possible occasions, to

create, or *attempt* to create disturbances at the popular gatherings in Dublin. In general, however, his efforts had the same fate as those of the unhappy youth in classic story, in being made—

“*Nec Diis, nec viribus æquis;*”

and ending in his total discomfiture and prostration.

In 1837 or 1838, his myrmidons, reinforced by a band of 300 Spartan-*Orangemen* from Wicklow and Dublin counties, attempted to meddle with a meeting at the Coburg Gardens in Dublin, where a petition was being moved against Lord Stanley’s pet project of those times—his measure for disfranchising the constituencies of Ireland. The result of the attempt might be summed up as briefly as Cæsar’s world-famous bulletin; but with a slight change of person, number and mood in the verbs:—

“*VENIRUNT—VISI SUNT—VICTI SUNT!*”

“They came—they were seen—they were conquered!”

The head of the column of “*Protestant Ascendancy-boys*” was no sooner descried, than the coal-porters of Dublin, a formidable and furiously patriotic race, who with many assistants had

actually "camped out" the preceding night to *watch the platform*, broke up the rails of the latter, having been deprived by some lover of peace of all other weapons, and arming themselves with the fragments, rushed upon the Orange phalanx, (nearly every man of which had a pistol, or a dagger, or *both*, along with a good stick,) and knocked down or put to utter rout the luckless invaders—whose chiefs were said to have set a most prudent example, by running away the first.

On one occasion, when Mr. O'Connell was absent from Dublin, and the proceedings of the Association were not expected to be of much interest, the Reverend Tresham Gregg, with a chosen legion, suddenly appeared at the door of the Corn Exchange, and forcing admission, rushed up-stairs, and took possession of the "Great Room," compelling the few that had yet assembled there to consult their safety by flight. Three sound and hearty *Protestant* cheers were given when this feat was accomplished, and the Reverend Leader installed into the Chair. Resolutions, it is said, were then formally proposed and passed, denouncing Popery, Repeal, Daniel O'Connell, and all their aiders and abettors; and

the *Popish* and “Repeal” echoes of the walls were astonished by being called into requisition to syllable the Shibboleths of Orangeism and “Protestant Ascendency!”

“And all went merry as a marriage bell—
When, hush ! hark ! — a deep sound strikes, like a rising
knell !
Did they not hear it ?—no, ’twas but the wind,
Or the car, rattling o’er the stony street.
On with the *speech*—let *spite* be unconfin’d,
No stay, nor stop, when Orange spouters meet
In Popish agitators’ wonted seat :—
When, hush ! hark ! that deep sound strikes in once more !
And, nearer, clearer, deadlier than before !
Run ! run !! “*It is—it is the coal-porters’ dread roar !*”

And so, in truth, and in an unlucky hour for the poor invaders, it was ! Tresham Gregg and his comrades had, unfortunately for themselves, entirely forgot that the Corn Exchange Rooms were on the Coal-quay, and exactly at that part of it where the coal-porters—always, as I have said, very determined patriots—“most did congregate.” The entry of the Orangemen had not been noticed ; but a fugitive Repealer from the rooms up-stairs, having brought down the intelligence of Gregg’s onslaught and its temporary success, the *war-cry* spread ;—drays, coals, and all

were abandoned in an instant, and the BLACK DIAMONDS rushed up to the rescue of the invaded and polluted head-quarters of Agitation.

But for the undeserved compassion of some of the clerks of the Association, who opened the small door before mentioned to the retreat of the Orangemen, they might have had sore cause to rue that day ; and as it was, many of them bore away not very honourable marks of their adventure.

The “ Coal-porters ” of Dublin have other claims to remembrance for their services to the popular cause. Mr. O’Connell used always to say, that but for them he “ *could not have carried Catholic Emancipation.* ”

The fact was, that during a part of the earlier progress of the old Catholic Association, a number of students of Trinity College (the University of Dublin), aided by some of their brother Orangeists, the low, drunken, and dissolute portion of the “ freemen ” of Dublin, had several times invaded the popular meetings, and although outnumbered and *ousted* on each occasion that they had thus adventured, had succeeded so far as to disturb considerably the proceedings, and deter quiet men and ladies from attending.

While yet exposed to this annoyance, and not quite seeing how he could altogether prevent it, mischievous and embarrassing as its consequences were, Mr. O'Connell had taken the "Corn Exchange" premises for the infant Association; and that body had moved in and taken possession. To his astonishment he all at once found the meetings undisturbed, not the slightest attempt being renewed to interfere with them; and he speedily learned that this was owing to a wholesome and a well grounded fear of a *thrashing* from the honest coal-porters, whose protection he had quite unwittingly secured, by coming into their peculiar territory.

He often said that the Catholic Association should have had to give up its meetings if those disturbances continued; and that nothing stopped the latter, or could have stopped them, but the stout guardianship of "*the boys of the Coal Quay.*"

Tresham Gregg made a final attempt when Conciliation Hall was first opened in October 1843: but did not succeed on that occasion in saying twenty sentences, when he had to be rescued, *vi et armis*, by poor Tom Steele and others,

from the tender hands of his old antagonists, who were shrewdly inclined to dip him in the river, or at least to give him an exemplary *dusting* with the coal-sacks.

The great occurrence of this year (1843), and the culminating point of the “monster meeting” agitation, was the assemblage at Tara Hill, upon Tuesday, the 15th of August.

To that meeting, which was announced and advertised for several weeks previously, enormous multitudes of people from all the counties within two days’ march and even upwards of the scene of action, resolved to go, and carried their determination into effect;—from Dublin county, Kildare, West Meath, Wicklow, Louth, and all parts of the county Meath itself, it was not very wonderful that, in those times of excitement and enthusiasm, there should have been large “contingents” to swell the attendance at this great meeting. But the counties of Longford, Cavan, Wexford, Kilkenny, King’s and Queen’s, Monaghan, and even Fermanagh, and Down, in the north; and Tipperary and distant Clare, in the south, added to the numbers who then came together. For days and nights before the 15th of August, people

were on the move, bearing with them provisions for the time of their absence from home, and trusting to the fineness of the weather to enable them to dispense with lodging-houses, and sleep out—

“ With nothing but the sky for a great coat.”

The 15th of August is a holiday of strict and peculiar observance in the Catholic Church, being one of the great festivals of the blessed Virgin; and the injunction to hear mass is as strictly enjoined and obeyed as it is upon a Sunday. To convenience the myriads that were on the ground at Tara Hill on that morning, a number of clergymen volunteered, with the permission of the good Bishop of the Diocese, the Right Rev. Doctor Cantwell, to say their masses in the open air, at temporary altars constructed upon the sides and summit of the hill. At the least thirty or forty masses were thus celebrated during the morning, and each had a congregation of many thousands.

It is described as having been a most strikingly impressive sight. Within the compass of vision five or six masses could be seen proceeding at the same time, but at some hundreds of yards apart; each with a vast multitude radiating around it,

bare-headed, on their knees, deeply attentive and apparently absorbed in their devotions. Not a sound was to be heard throughout that densely peopled space, save the low murmur of the voices of the officiating priests, or the tinkling of the tiny mass-bells at the appointed periods of the service. These borne upon the gentle breathings of the summer-breeze were all that met the ear; while to the eye, universal nature seemed stilled and fixed in profoundest reverence and adoration of its God. The glorious August sun shone down in cloudless brilliancy upon the whole, and it scarce seemed an idle and vain presumption to fancy that its splendour typified the blessing of Almighty Providence descending on the sinless struggle of a nation to recover their long lost liberties and rights.

A scene equally impressive, and partaking also of a religious character, succeeded to the regular service of the day. Tara Hill, it is well known, was the scene of a sanguinary defeat of the insurgents in the disastrous year 1798, by the royal army, consisting of regular troops and yeomanry. The unfortunate herd of undisciplined and nearly unarmed peasants had been foolishly persuaded to

make a stand against fully armed, well equipped, and (in comparison to them) *disciplined* troops; with scarcely a single advantage of position beyond the mere fact of being on a hill, instead of down in the plain. Tara Hill is in no way difficult of ascent by nature, and the only artificial difficulties consisted of a few ditches and low hedges, with the walls of a ruined church of no great extent. The consequence was, that after some sharp fighting for a short time, the insurgents were completely driven from their position with terrible loss, and almost annihilated in their retreat.

The bodies of the soldiers, yeomanry, and militia-men who had fallen in the brief but bloody encounter among the inclosures, were given decent and christian burial in the grave-yard of the old church before-mentioned; but the remains of the unhappy insurgents were not deemed worthy of similar treatment. A vast trench was opened on the bleak exposed brow of the hill, and into it were cast the mangled and gory corpses; collected not only from the scene of the last desperate stand, but from everywhere along the line of flight. The earth was then shovelled hastily in upon them, leaving a huge ridge, long,

irregular, and unsightly, even to ghastliness, to mark where had been gathered in that terrible harvest of death. The grass of many summers had long ago covered over and hidden all the unsightliness, and the green ridge, with its luxuriant herbage waving in the passing breeze, was pleasant and inviting to the eye of the chance visitor, who might not know the fearful material with which it had been mainly raised.

Hitherwards a species of pilgrimage was made, as if by common consent, of the vast crowds upon the hill, after they had heard mass; and they knelt in thousands by and near this wild grave, offering up various prayers of the Catholic Church for the eternal repose of the souls of the multitude whose bones were mouldering beneath them. The most indifferent or hostile observer—the man most dissenting from these poor people in their sentiments, opinions, and tendencies, political and religious—could not fail to have been deeply struck and impressed with the real sublimity of this scene; and it must ever be preserved in the liveliest and most solemn remembrance by those witnesses who were identified with the people in feelings and convictions.

A trifling but singular circumstance connected with the locality, and the scene itself, attracted considerable attention and curiosity at the time; and was *almost* made a matter of accusation in the State prosecutions of the end of the year, against the "Agitators," who were the objects of those prosecutions.

A small species of wild geranium, bearing a flower closely resembling in shape a *pike head*, with its usual ferocious adornments of an axe blade at one side of the shoulder of the weapon, and a crook at the other, (intended for cutting the reins of cavalry,) is found in some abundance growing on and near the "*Croppies' Grave*,"—that is, the ridge before-mentioned, where were buried the slaughtered rebels, or "*Croppies*," as they were designated in 1798, in allusion to the then *revolutionary* symbol of wearing the hair cut short behind, and without powder. A further singularity and point of *rapprochement* is, that this little flower is streaked with crimson, just as its formidable likeness might be supposed to appear after hard service in close engagement. The story goes, that nowhere else in the vicinity are any specimens to be met with beyond the limits of the

“*Croppies’ Grave* ;” and however the fact may be, the popular belief being quite decided in that respect, the people took especial and particular notice of this *lusus naturæ*, and gathered it in quantities to preserve as a memorial of the place and the occasion.

As before said, this circumstance wanted very little of being made *a capital item* of charge against us, at a later period of the year ; and was actually made a subject of some comment by the Attorney-General, when unfolding and detailing his “monster indictment.”

Early in the morning, Mr. O’Connell, &c. having heard mass, we repaired to a public breakfast given to the Repealers by one of the staunchest and most ardent of our party, among the truly respectable and valuable middle classes of Dublin, Mr. McGarry, of Baggot Street. From thence, after a thorough “*agitation breakfast*,” and a fearful demolition of the good things provided for us, we started for Tara Hill. The day was fine, the streets and roads were crowded, the people seemed everywhere exulting and enthusiastic ; and in short, there was every thing to excite and to exhilarate around us, and meet us at every yard of the way.

For some hours the "pace" was good, and we got along in great style. But we were yet miles from the hill, though full in view, when the thickening crowds, and the already evident symptoms of a regular *encampment*, reduced us first to a broken jog-trot, and finally to a walk. I do not at the moment remember the exact line of our approach, but it was by a very circuitous and winding route; at both sides of which there were, during the last two or three miles, all kinds of vehicles which had discharged their occupants, or cargo, ranged along; the carts and jaunting-cars tilted up with their shafts in the air, the carriages with the poles unshipped, and stowed away, and the horses piqueted after a rude fashion in the fields behind. Meantime those who had occupied or brought them, had gone forward to the hill, leaving in some cases a boy to watch their property, but in many cases, *no one at all*: nor was there an instance known, in which plunder had occurred in consequence.

The same scene, we were informed, was to be witnessed along all the other lines of the approach, the only variations being where—under the bodies of the carts, and within rude tents, constructed of

some old sheets and blankets—parties who dreaded to encounter the crush on the hill, and whose ambition was satisfied by being able to say that they *had* gone to the Tara meeting, were snugly ensconced, exchanging their comments on the cavalcade going by them; and occasionally engaging in sharp encounters of small wit and mutual gibings, with the less prudent or more daring among the passing throng.

From the moment that we reached the foot of the hill, and commenced its ascent, our horses had an easy time of it. The carriage, a heavy travelling vehicle, well laden inside, with box-seats fore and aft outside also filled, and one or two particularly obliging friends on the roof, was literally and absolutely *borne up* the hill by the vast human wave surging upward to its crest. Such a scene as the hill itself presented has seldom been witnessed. The whole of its surface, and a very wide circle around its base, were *black* with dense masses of human beings; and long winding lines of black, radiating away to all points of the compass, marked where yet were pouring along or were encamped additional multitudes of people.

The vast human swarms at every point of the

elevation displayed in relief against the sky, or in stronger and more striking relief against their own dark masses, banners and insignia of all kinds; and the uniformity was further broken by occasional *mounds*, as it were, of clustering human beings raised above the general level by scaffolding, or the grouping here and there of several vehicles close together, so as to form a species of rude hustings.

The monster mound of all was right in the centre of the topmost level of the hill. There was erected the platform for the chairman, secretary, speakers, and reporters; and a perfect forest of flags, streamers, bunches of gay ribands at the heads of white wands, borne by the chief managers of the meeting, waved over head; while patriotic mottos of all kinds, in English and in Irish, were displayed on the bulwark that protected the whole length of the front.

It was said, but I believe without truth, that Ledru Rollin, who, within the last fourteen months, has been playing so strange a part in French politics, was present on this occasion. If he were so, it certainly was entirely without the knowledge of Mr. O'Connell, or those who were gene-

rally about him. Some of the evidence given at the "State Trials," a few months later, would have inclined the general belief to accept the fact, had it not come from a suspicious quarter; namely, an official, long known for his Orange principles and tendency to ultra-zeal. To do him justice, he did not positively declare it; but such was the effect of his testimony; and according to him the people, at least in the outskirts of the crowd, were full of the idea of seeing the "illustrious stranger," and manifested their feelings by repeated cheers for "*Leathery Rolling!*"—that being *their* version of the name in which rejoices the great Brutus *manqué* of Republican France.

A couple of months previously, Ledru Rollin had made a tender of his sympathies and those of the "*extrême gauche*" (or, as the French joke then had it, "*extrêmement gauche*") party in France, to the Repealers of Ireland. The offer was heralded and announced with a great flourish of trumpets in the newspapers of that party in Paris, particularly in their chief organ, *Le National*; and a letter was written by Ledru Rollin to Mr. O'Connell on the subject.

The latter courteously but utterly and abso-

lutely declined the offer; and willingly accepted all the attacks of the *then* party of the "*National*," rather than have the semblance of looking for, or desiring foreign alliance in a constitutional struggle.

With the speeches, &c. at the meeting this record has nothing to do, and so any person curious on that subject must refer himself to the columns of the Irish newspapers of the time. It was, of course, impossible that any but a very small portion of that enormous assemblage could have been at all cognizant of the matter of the speeches delivered at the main hustings. But that portion was very small only as compared with the whole number congregated on and about the hill; and would have formed a very respectable-sized meeting in itself: and the deepest and the stillest attention was manifested to the proceedings by all within the radius of the speakers' voices. And even beyond that radius there were many circles, the individuals composing which contented themselves with receiving at second-hand from their more fortunate neighbours the sentiment, whatever it might be, that had just called forth the bursts of cheering, in which they themselves had

actually taken part on trust, and in anticipation of its proving a rightful appeal to their sympathies and feelings.

The only interruptions were when some gaily-attired "*temperance-band*," placed out of earshot of the proceedings on the platform, unluckily took it into their heads to while away the time by discoursing most eloquent music of their own; an occurrence that ensured to them a volley of indignant execrations and adjurations, quite sufficient, one would have thought, to scare away the Muse for ever, and nip their genius in the bud.

Some of the minor and more distant platforms, or hustings, which were quite beyond the reach even of telegraphic communication of what was going on at the principal stand, became as it were the suns of other systems, and had each their own little blaze of oratory, and their own particular concentrations. And beyond these, again, in the outermost verge of the assembly, the older and graver met and talked and nodded their heads together, and exchanged their congratulations on the "*great day for Ireland* that was *in it*, glory be to Heaven!" while the younger and lighter-spirited made a ring around some travelling bagpiper

or fiddler, and danced away heartily and merrily ; with every now and then a blithesome spring into the air, and a ringing whoop for "*Ould Ireland and the Repale.*"

A public dinner followed, which was held in a large enclosure near Tara hall, the handsome mansion of Mr. Lynch, a gentleman of fortune and family in the neighbourhood. The enclosure was for the greater part tented over with canvass, but the night was so serene, and the weather so beautiful, that the dinner might well have taken place *sub-lunâ*. An enormous number of persons contrived to be present, every inch, not only of sitting but of standing-room, being most fully occupied, and the walls of the enclosure bearing their burthen also. The usual patriotic toasts and speeches, and more than usual excitement and enthusiasm, marked the proceedings, which did not terminate until nearly an hour after midnight.

Being anxious to get home, I availed myself of the offer of a seat in the vehicle in which the reporters were starting for Dublin, with their treasures of eloquence for the morning papers. We had a drive of four or five hours, under a most brilliant moon ; and along a road, both path-

ways of which were strewn with human forms, prostrate and inanimate as if dead. An army, after a severe and harassing march under an enemy's fire, could not have left greater appearances of desolation and destruction along its track. The poor fellows—men and boys, on their return from Tara to their homes in Dublin and its vicinity, had sunk down, one on top of the other in frequent groups along the pathways; and here and there broken cars or other vehicles, with the horses loosed from the harness, and stretched and sleeping like their masters, increased the resemblance I have spoken of. The clear cold moon shone down brightly upon all, chastening the more vulgar features of the scene, and rendering it singularly impressive.

The thought has more than once occurred, that this was the crowning day of my father's life. He had had a substantial triumph before, in the success of his weary and protracted labours for Catholic Emancipation; and a minor triumph in the striking off subsequently of one of the few remaining links of Catholic servitude, by the accomplishment of Municipal Reform. He had won distinction at his profession, and his enemies had been compelled to mark their acknowledgment of

it, and to confess, and endeavour to repair, the injustice of the exclusions they had practised against him. He had had many and abundant proofs from numerous parts of Ireland of the love and affection of his fellow-countrymen; and the title of "LIBERATOR" had been conferred upon him apparently with their general assent. But the triumphs and honours of the year 1843 had come thronging so thickly and rapidly upon each other, and accompanied by such circumstances of high and enthusiastic excitement, and deep and at times really sublime impressiveness, that all former events seemed little in comparison, and all former results likely to be outshone, surpassed, and crowned by the great and final achievement towards which the popular movement under his guidance appeared to be assuredly advancing.

The previous meetings, succeeding one another at intervals of but a few days during the course of four months, had gone on increasing in numbers in almost a geometrical ratio; but on the hill of Tara an assemblage had now come together, far exceeding any of them, and almost equalling the entire aggregate of their respective numbers.

And the peace, good order, good humour, unity

of purpose, high intelligence of the end sought and entire devotion to the working of it out, that had marked the demeanour of the people before, manifested themselves upon this occasion in redoubled quantity and intensity, as if to keep in suitable proportion to the mere numerical increase.

Tara, then, — with its million of human beings congregated peaceably, and without any of the weapons of physical strife,—to declare for, and demand the restoration and full enjoyment of the inalienable rights of the citizens of a free land, may be considered to have been, as it were, the summing-up and climax of the mighty national movement of 1843, and at the same time the most sublime spectacle, because by far the largest demonstration of the will of a people using only the force of argument and of opinion in the pursuit of their ends, that ever the world has witnessed.

To be the leader and chief in such a scene—the observed of all observers—the one upon the accents of whose lips tens and hundreds of thousands hung with implicit confidence, and confiding and admiring affection—to be thus, as it were, solemnly installed by a nation in the high position of its

fully accepted and entirely trusted representative, —this was an honour and surpassing distinction, such as well might warrant exultation in the heart of its object, and make him feel repaid for many and many a long year of labour and sacrifice long apparently thankless, and of coldness, taunt, calumny, treachery, and disappointment.

But Daniel O'Connell, though he would have been more than man if he had not felt this exultation, allowed it no farther influence on his mind than served to brace anew and strengthen his resolve to struggle onward to the last in the cause of the people that thus trusted him and honoured him, and of the country that he so fondly and devotedly loved.

That day the star of his earthly destinies touched its meridian—that day his fortunes culminated, and the labours of his life met their highest earthly reward. And even from that very day commenced the decline, slow and imperceptible at first, but soon to be sadly manifest in its accelerated and still accelerating progress, till the end was reached, of his hopes and those of unhappy Ireland.

Rashness, jealousy, and treachery were at work

even then and there. At the outskirts of the meeting, and even upon the very hustings, where sat Mr. O'Connell himself, these agencies were busy; and feeble as their efforts then were, and almost imperceptible in their results, yet the intestine war, in aid of the two great objects of English policy, division and domination, was then begun, and thenceforward steadily progressed until our ruin was accomplished.

CHAPTER IX.

ENGLAND'S PRIDE OF DOMINATION.—CAMPAIGN AGAINST REPEAL.—
EARL OF RODEN.—SIR JAMES GRAHAM.—MEETING AT ATHLONE.—
MEETING IN DUNDALK.—MR. O'CONNELL'S SPEECH.—VENEDY.

WHILE these monster meetings were going on in Ireland, there was much kindling of wrath, and direful explosions of it at times in either House of Parliament.

The besetting sin of England and of Englishmen is pride.

“ By that sin fell the angels. How can man, then,
Though the image of his Maker, hope to win by it ? ”

England *has* won by it as yet. Self-confidence and a high opinion of one's self is not a more useful quality for an ambitious individual than it is for an ambitious nation; and not a few of the successes of England are attributable to the high

daring inspired by the quality in question. Some time or other, however, the old condemnation against pride will be vindicated, and carried out in her case, as history, sacred and profane, records it to have been in many a similar case throughout the long reach of ages.

Her pride of domination—the worst and most inveterate form of her besetting sin—was alarmed at the Irish movement; and when that occurs in England there is an end of reason, of argument, of all idea of justice, mercy, or any consideration whatever. What is called the natural fairness of Englishmen, at least of Englishmen in the aggregate, practically amounts to this, that provided you are *down*, and *very* down—utterly helpless and submissive—they may good-humouredly let you alone, or even extend assistance with a kind of contemptuous good nature. But offend in any way against John Bull's darling self-consequence and self-adulation, and he will crush you if he can!

In 1843 the monster meetings sorely troubled his digestion. It seemed as if Ireland—the vassal Ireland!—tired of waiting for the fulfilment of illusory promises, had resolved on trying to assist herself, without reference to what might be the

good will and pleasure of her powerful and not very scrupulous neighbour. It was of no consequence what might be the extent of the real grievances of which she complained—no matter what justice and right might ordain as to them—the sole and grand object of attention and effort was to stop her, and to punish her for daring to manifest the least disposition towards thinking and acting for herself!

The campaign against the Repealers began with flying notices of motion and “questions” to ministers in the Commons, during the very appropriate month of April. One notice on the subject was abandoned for the very sapient reason that its originator himself assigned in the House—viz. that he “could not get Mr. O’Connell to come over and meet it!”

On the 9th of May, however, something more important than these *avant-coureurs* was essayed as a demonstration against Repeal. The heavy artillery were brought up and got into position; and the Earl of Roden, the great gun of the Irish Orangemen, opened fire in the House of Lords. Of his speech it is needless to say anything. It was what from an Irish Orangeman of the present

times might be expected—an abnegation of pride of country—a willing acceptance of provincialism, provided only that so much of the old “Orange ascendancy” in Ireland as had been left untouched by the Catholic Relief Act of 1829 should be favoured and still upheld.

The Irish Orangemen in 1780, 1782, and 1800, acted very differently indeed, and spoke in quite another fashion. I have before me at this moment the resolutions of upwards of thirty Orange lodges in various parts of the kingdom against the plan, and *any* plan, of a Legislative Union, and declaring, “*as Orangemen and Irishmen,*” their utter abhorrence of such a measure, and devotion to the legislative independence of their native land. If the rumour, now (*August* 1849) gaining strength, of the destruction of the potato prove to be true, a climax of ruin may speedily be attained in Ireland, when the descendants of those who spoke and wrote so honourably and manfully will have the conviction forced upon them, by their own urgent perils, that there is but one chance, one hope, for the unhappy country in which their lot is cast, and that is, in the return of her rich absentees, and their taking counsel with the

people on the common danger, in their restored native Parliament.

The interest of England, too, will be found imperatively to demand this blessed change. Otherwise, she will be as linked with a carcass exhausted of all its vitality, and tainting to the heart the vitality of the empire itself.

Strange to say, the parliamentary thunders affrighted not the souls of the audacious Repealers. Notwithstanding the announcement of the ministers, that they would prefer inflicting on Ireland all the horrors of civil war, in preference to conceding to us our constitutional and inalienable right of managing our own affairs—notwithstanding the philippics of poor Lord Brougham, seeking service, and ready to do any dirty work for it—notwithstanding even the *powerful* and *commanding* eloquence, adorned and rendered more impressive by classic purity of taste, of Lord Beaumont—still the Repealers persisted, and still Repeal went ahead.

“ Per damna, per cædes, ab ipso,
Duxit opes, animumque *bello*.”

It was possibly in the momentary ebullition of disappointment at this, that Sir James Graham,

then Secretary for the Home Department, uttered his famous declaration against Ireland—a declaration which, with its withdrawal, has been noticed before.

In that notice there was the hope expressed that the then coming—now the *past*—session, would see opportunities taken by him and Sir Robert Peel to give practical effect to their new-born favourable dispositions towards Ireland, as announced by them in 1845 and 1846. Sir Robert Peel has in this session shadowed out a policy of larger and broader dimensions than hitherto propounded; and far as it might fall short of what the Irish people believe to be the only real—the only entire and permanent remedy of our thousand ills, yet there cannot be a doubt that had it been adopted, and were it now coming into operation, enormous and immediate relief would have been given to a sinking country; and the fearful winter that is before us, if the report of the potato failure prove correct, would be robbed of half its terrors. But it has not been adopted, and now—

“ The tempest-clouds close o’er us—which, when rent,
The earth will be strew’d thick with other earth,
Which her own clay will cover—heap’d and pent;
Peasant and lord—friend, foe—in one vast ruin blent ! ”

Sir James Graham would have given Sir Robert Peel the aid of his singular business habits, clear-headedness and efficiency, in carrying out this really "*large and comprehensive*" scheme, and thereby done much to ensure its success. So far surmise may go as respects him; notwithstanding that there dwells in our minds rather unpleasantly the memory of certain words of his this session that would argue a cruel churlishness as to temporary relief to the starving hordes of the west of Ireland. In other respects he has maintained a dignified position this session, and displayed less of his old faults; especially of that caustic levity and proneness to indulge in a tartness often quite gratuitous, and always exceedingly offensive, to which he formerly gave over much indulgence.

It is in no spirit of fulsomeness, and in no forgetfulness of the unworthy past, that I make these allusions to the two leading men of the old opposition. Neither is it in any very defined hopefulness. Too many blank and bitter disappointments have resulted from placing faith in projects and declarations and manifestations of intentions, proceeding from men out of office.

Too well have we seen that the iron yoke of the prejudiced and unreasoning public opinion of the potential middle classes of England — prejudiced and unreasoning with regard to Irish affairs—will make any set or denomination of ministers to wince like “galled jades,” when once the harness of office is upon them. But it is in the nature, that is to say, in the feebleness, of man to be ever seeking to exchange the contemplation of the actual, real and instant, for the more pleasing pictures that imagination draws of the possible and the contingent.

The present ministers, or the powers that bear upon and influence them, are afflicted with political economy *run mad*, and most unjust in its madness, as well as unwise and ungenerous. We are neither to be allowed to help ourselves, by the means of our restored parliament, and the circulation at home of our absentee capital, nor are we to receive any efficient assistance from the country that has usurped the control and management of our affairs. “*Laissez faire*” and “*laissez passer*,” the old dicta of Colbert’s time, have been applied to our unhappy case ; and as they so have been, we may be permitted to supply the free translation, viz.—

“*Laissez faire*,”—let the visitation of Providence have its full effect, unmitigated and uninterfered with; “*Laissez passer*,”—let the Irish people pass away, and give place to an English and Scotch immigration.

Being upon the chapter of “*Monster Meetings*,” it may not be uninteresting to review some passages in an account of them by a foreigner, who was an eyewitness.

“*Athlone Meeting, June 1843.*— . . . Those on the platform were mainly of the middle classes from the towns. Every third man at least was a priest. About 100 yards off was a second platform, raised for the ladies. By degrees the multitude on foot collected round our platform, and soon formed a body so firm and compact, that they all seemed to have sprung from the earth in one mass. The majority nearest to us were stout full grown men and young lads. Further off there was a circle of men on horseback, whose number, like those on foot, was continually increasing. Behind them lay on the ground, stood, or walked about, the women, and the less strong or the less curious. There were from forty to fifty thousand persons gathered together before that

which may be properly termed 'the meeting' commenced. It was a wondrous sight to behold this mass of living beings, waiting thus patiently for the things to come, or rather for The Coming Man. There was something, too, very peculiar in this sight, and the manner, order, or regulation in which it involuntarily presented itself.

"The men wore a sort of uniform; for grey coats are the prevailing fashion as to dress in Ireland. Women, on the contrary, prefer scarlet; and on the present occasion their dress constituted a striking contrast to that in the foreground of the picture. A good hour passed before Mr. O'Connell, and the conductors of the festival, with the bands of the teetotallers, arrived, and during all that time the greatest peace and order prevailed. There was much greater stillness than I could have thought it possible.

"At last there was a movement in the rear of the assembly, and all poured towards one common centre. Now there rose a cry such as never before had greeted my ears. Now all hats are raised in the air, and there burst forth the unanimous shouts, 'Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah! Long live O'Connell! Long live the Liberator!' A hundred thousand

voices sent forth these salutations to the man whose necromantic power had circled them around him. He sat on the box-seat of a carriage, drawn by four horses, and he answered the salutation with head, and hand, and cap. How he made his way from the carriage to the tribune, I do not to this day even comprehend; for there was not room for a person to fall, much less to walk. ‘Make way for the Liberator,’ was the charm word which accomplished that wonder that otherwise had been an impossibility. . Arrived upon the tribune, a seat was brought for him, on which he sat down, whilst Tom Steele, with one or two more of his friends, held a standard over his head, which served as a shade to protect him from the rays of the sun.

* * * * *

“ Our conversation was interrupted by the breaking down of one of the steps of the platform. All stood up and looked towards the quarter from which danger was apprehended. O’Connell stood up amongst the rest, and Tom Steele said to him, ‘It is nothing—you need not fear.’ ‘Fear, fear!’ answered O’Connell with so proud a glance, and in such a rebuking tone, that whilst I felt

deeply with his friend, it was also clear to me, that nothing could be more strange to the mind of the Irish Agitator, than the thought of fear.

“One after another did the different orators and proposers of resolutions perform their respective parts, and it seemed to me as if the great body of the auditory paid as little attention to them as I myself had done. Meanwhile O’Connell sat calmly in his chair. At last his turn came, and then the joy and exultation with which he was received, was actually indescribable. Never did I see any thing to be compared to it, or even like it.

* * * * *

“The orator retired amid cheers that were repeated over and over again. His friend, Tom Steele, covered his shoulders with a cloak, whilst a second handed him a peach, out of which he took a hearty bite. He then, whilst stretching out his hand for an orange which a third person was presenting to him, said smilingly to one of the by-standers: ‘To succeed with a multitude as a speaker, you must always say something that will excite their spirits and make them laugh.’

“In one passage, the Liberator presented himself

to my view in a perfectly different light. In the midst of his speech, a portion of his hearers began all at once to run—an unruly horse had broken away. Those nearest to the furious animal gave ground; those who were pressed upon by them, in turn pressed upon their neighbours, and in an instant, a great portion of the congregated mass was in flight—a panic terror seized them, and drove them onward. There was the noise of a hundred thousand men, all in a state of excitement, rising up together, and a portion of them flying away terrified! It was like the rapid advance of a heavy body of cavalry; and with this noise there was the knowledge of the fact, that the garrison at Athlone had been considerably strengthened. Enough! There were all the elements at hand to give wings to the aroused terrors of the multitude, and all was rushing to inextricable confusion, and irremediable disorder—when the calm, but thunder-like tones of O'Connell came pealing over the multitude. He uttered but the words, 'Stand still!' and those whose minds but an instant before were confused by fear, appeared as if each was chained to the spot on which that voice reached them! Never did I behold such a cir-

cumstance. It was as if fate would put the power of his word to the proof, and wished to demonstrate that it was omnipotent.

“Such a power, assuredly, no human being ever exercised, who did not know how to touch the finest chords of the human heart.

“With the speech of O’Connell was the popular festival at an end. A few speeches were delivered after this, but the people gradually dispersed, and by the time that the last of the orators was delivering himself of his sentiments, he had but as his auditors a small train of Repealers, who seemed resolved to die martyrs in the cause.

“The road from the place of meeting to Athlone, though but two English miles, still required an hour’s time to get over it; for it was crammed full of carriages of all sorts, wagons, cars, carts, horsemen, and pedestrians. In the van, marched almost in military order, and with colours flying and music playing, the Temperance bands: these were followed by the unorganized masses.

“The evening banquet took place beneath a tent, the tables shot out in rays from a round one in the midst, and at one side there was a cross table for the Committee and the guests.

At this sat Lord Ffrench, as president, and beside him O'Connell, with from twelve to fourteen of the most distinguished personages. Opposite there was a box for ladies, and not far distant from them a band of music. The food and music were equally bad, and the majority of the guests at the grand table seemed to be convinced of the fact, for even few amongst them made the attempt to touch what was set before them; and I even remarked that the covers were not removed from many of the dishes. O'Connell at first drank only water, afterwards he added a little wine to it, and if I had not seen him partake of a glass of champagne, I should have regarded him as a half teetotaller.

“The toasts of ‘the Queen,’ of ‘Prince Albert,’ and of ‘the Duchess of Kent,’ were drank with great joy. O'Connell himself gave the word of command to every hurrah, with all the precision of a toast-master. At last came the toast, ‘O'Connell, O'Connell and Repeal.’”

“*The Meeting in Dundalk, 29th June, 1843.*—About five or six miles our stage coach overtook ‘the Liberator;’ we found it exceedingly difficult to proceed, for a multitude of carriages followed

his, and by its sides rode or ran young and old, on horseback and on foot, and all shouting joyfully. As we passed his carriage, which was drawn by four horses, he nodded kindly towards me. I perceived he was accompanied by a member of the Dundalk deputation, whilst a second member, with Tom Steele, occupied the box-seat.

“Before him marched the different bands of the teetotallers, some on foot, some in large vans; they made a most awful noise, for they all played at the same time, and each of them a different tune. The first band played ‘God save the Queen’—the second, with respect be it mentioned, ‘the Garland of Love’—and the third rattled away, with the force, the rapidity, and the monotony of the clapper of a mill, the constantly-repeated ‘Patrick’s day in the Morning.’ The procession stopped some time before my window, and it may well be fancied what a gratification it must have been to have these three different pieces of music commulated into one! I heard the three pieces afterwards played separately, but, alas! I must own, that so bad were they in detail, that I preferred the triplicated time of ‘God save the Queen,’ ‘the Garland’ and ‘Patrick’s day’ to any

one of them separated from the rest—*i.e.* as it was given by the bands of Dundalk.

“At length the procession moved on, and in a few moments afterwards, O’Connell’s carriage, drawn by four horses, was seen turning into the town. O’Connell stood erect in the carriage, and saluted the people on all sides; whilst in every glance of his eye there was triumph, and the exhilarating feelings of joy. And wherefore should there not? Who could, as he, this day say—‘I am the man—Daniel O’Connell?’

“I have often seen many princes and royal personages make their solemn entries into my own old Cologne, and other places, but all was ‘child’s play’ to that which now presented itself to my view. The streets were so full that there was left no longer the possibility of walking in them; all were either borne, or pushed forward. I had a bird’s-eye view of the entire scene; I looked down upon it, and could behold nought but heads—not even the shoulders of the men were visible. Never did I see anything like to this; and never did I hear anything like to that prolonged—that never-ending ‘Hurrah for O’Connell!—hurrah for the Liberator!’ He stopped before the house

where I was; he descended from his carriage; and oh, miracle of miracles! a large broad pathway was instantly opened for him in that dense crowd, which as instantly closed behind him, once he had passed.

“Whilst I was engaged reflecting upon this wondrous spectacle, I beheld another, and one that was still more beautiful. In the very centre of that closely-pressed—that jammed-together throng, I observed one small point unoccupied, which always came nearer and nearer towards the house. What, I asked, can that be? or why is there that little spot left free? The riddle was soon explained—the mystery was soon unravelled; for in the centre of that little unoccupied space, I beheld—a *cripple*! I love the Irish people; but never did I in my life see anything which so much entitles them to the love, the admiration, and the respect of every philanthropic, of every feeling, of every honest heart, as this; making a space, and giving free room to the helpless, pithless cripple, in a crowded multitude, through which the strongest giant would in vain have struggled to force his way. Oh! yes; they are a good, a truly good people—these poor Irish!

* * * * *

“I have seldom shaken the hand of any one with so cordial a feeling as that of Tom Steele. Yes—a man of honour—a noble hearted being is ‘honest Tom Steele!’

“O’Connell’s speech at the dinner was as fine as any of his that I have ever read or heard. It was more grave than usual, even though it occasionally sparkled with humour. In their entirety, his speeches are always the same; but this fact in itself is the proof of the greatness of the orator. There are but few things that possess the privilege of constant repetition; to be always the same, and yet for ever magnificent and beautiful. It is the sea alone—the Alps alone—the finest, greatest works of art of the mightiest masters alone, that one can again and again gaze upon, and yet never be tired looking at them. The speeches of O’Connell have much of this original beauty in them; they are always like to one another, they are in their entirety ever the same. His first Repeal speech in Parliament in 1834, is no other than his speech before the inhabitants of Dundalk, and yet there is in it that which gives it a new hue, an original form, and thus renders it at the

same time exquisitely beautiful, and enchantingly captivating. These are the peculiarities that always distinguish the works of a great master.”*

This repetition and sameness of substance in Mr. O’Connell’s speeches was, in fact, the result of a deliberate purpose. His maxim was, that to enunciate a political axiom, or argument, once or twice, was of little avail ; that things so enunciated scarcely struck the popular mind at all ; and were, at any rate, speedily forgotten. To make an impression—to sink the truth deep in that mind, and cause it to fructify in popular exertion—it was necessary to repeat and to repeat again and again : varying the phrase, if possible, but the matter substantially the same. Indeed, in some points he considered it an advantage that even the very wording should be repeated, till the phrase should catch, and become a popular Shibboleth.

I believe that Cobbett and he were the only two public men that preached and practised this doctrine ; and both with success in their peculiar line.

* “ Ireland and the Irish, during the Repeal Year, 1843. By J. Venedy, Dublin. Translated by W. B. McCabe, Esq. London.”

Venedy, the German, whose descriptions I have quoted, was last year a member of that most incongruous, imbecile, and yet mischievous absurdity, the Frankfort Parliament. I am sorry to say that I believe he showed no greater wisdom than the bulk of his colleagues. Biernatski, whom he mentions, was a Polish refugee of the Revolution of 1831. He had been Minister of Finance for a time during the Revolution in Warsaw. He was settled quietly in Paris when I knew him, and his name has not appeared in any of the disturbances of last year.

CHAPTER X.

MR. MACAULAY.—SECTARIAN BIGOTRY.—PERSECUTION IN SWITZERLAND.—INCREASE OF REPEAL COMMITTEE.—REPEAL ASSOCIATION REPORTS.—MR. O'CONNELL'S SUGGESTIONS.—PROCEEDINGS OF REPEAL COMMITTEE.

AMONG the denouncers of the Repeal Agitation in parliament during the summer of the year 1843, was Thomas Babington Macaulay, poet, orator, historian, and quondam “*Cabinet Minister!*”

Mr. Macaulay, in the debates of ten years previously, on the Irish Coercion Bill of 1833, in his first great display in a reformed (or, I believe, *any*) House of Commons, experienced the fate which genius most richly merits when it degrades itself to ignoble purposes. He came out with an elaborately prepared oration in favour of the new measure of tyranny for Ireland; and it proved a most elaborate and utter failure.

On the occasion of the only time that the lyre of the great Magician of the North was heard to creak—that of his “*carmen triumphale*” on the victory of Waterloo—some such distich as the following was addressed to him:—

“Then none by pistol or by shot
Fell half so flat as Walter Scott!”

It might have been paraphrased with regard to the brilliant Macaulay’s assault upon Ireland and defence of coercion, for he fell flat indeed, and flat in the mud!*

How admirably he has since redeemed his fame it is not at all needful here to detail. The gushing richness and fulness of his eloquence absorbs, fascinates, and carries away his auditory, making them utterly oblivious, or, at least, disregardful of the occasional too great evidences of art and study. He never showed himself ready at an impromptu speech; but the sparkling brilliancy of his prepared efforts excused, covered, and most abundantly atoned for the attendant delays and infrequencies of their exhibition.

* Might the paraphrase run thus?

“Then none did show so shy and *smally*,
As Thomas Babington Macaulay!”

There was, however, a repetition of the *fall* in his declamation against Repeal in 1843. Sentence after sentence came out *ore rotundo*, stating alternative after alternative that he would prefer to the measure demanded by the people of Ireland—the restoration of their own parliament—each sentence ending with a “*no, never!*” strongly suggestive of the popular song, or burden of a song,

“*Did you ever? No, I never!*” &c. &c.

In sober sadness, it was *not* worthy of his talents and character to set himself thus up in petulant and puny opposition to a constitutional demand of an aggrieved people. It ought *not* to have been made an occasion for an oratorical display, and for what might indeed be called an empty oratorical bravado. No party in the State has ever yet been impeded in its labours for its object by frantic and unreasoning declamations against it. The repeal of an act of parliament is not a thing that can be proscribed or prevented by a claptrap speech. And if Lords Brougham and Beaumont, in the Lords, and Sir Robert Peel and a few officials, in the Commons, found themselves moved,—the two former from a love of mischief

and notoriety, the right honourable baronet for some politic purpose of the passing moment, and the others *because he did it*,—to commit themselves to the monstrous absurdity of declaring, that they would prefer civil war, with all its inevitable evils and horrors, to the possible, but yet only conjectural, inconveniences of reverting to the old constitutional system of separate parliaments, under which a foreign war was successfully conducted, a domestic rebellion crushed, and Ireland advanced many steps towards permanent prosperity; such conduct on their parts ought not to have been held worthy of imitation by a man who could not be uncertain of his own position in the eyes of the public; who had no passing interest of party or of office to subserve; and who, assuredly, can afford to be original in his opinions and actions.

Of Mr. Macaulay's achievements in the world of poesy, it would be difficult to speak in terms of admiration such as they deserve. In fact, it would need his own glowing language, and brilliancy of thought and expression, adequately to praise them.

Of his History, any criticism here would be out of place: but, as a Catholic, I enter protest against

it for gross sectarian bigotry, undeniably visible, under all the assumption of candour and historic truthfulness. And the general reader has a right to complain, when he finds himself called upon to accept, as accurate recitals of historic events, details and facts, warped and coloured by the party feelings of the day.

But as far as regards the matter of the protest, made in the preceding paragraph, it is only justice to Mr. Macaulay to say, that he is not singular among English writers of all ranks in the literary hierarchy, in the voluntary, or (as I hope in his case) *involuntary*, *suppressio veri*, and *suggestio falsi*, where Catholicism is concerned.

It is surprising, to say the least, that in this land of liberty—this England, where it is said that the rights of individuals, and in especial the freedom of private judgment, are most honoured and acknowledged,—those sacred rights, where exercised by Catholics abroad, are looked upon almost as crimes against mankind, and the invasions of them hailed with general approbation.

The simple refusal of the Catholic Priests of Prussia to bless certain mixed marriages, the circumstances of which brought them within the

scope of censures a long time recognised as the standing law of the Catholic Church, was in this country magnified into an act of Popish ecclesiastical *usurpation*, to the utter neglect of the fact, that the Priests in no way contested the validity of the *civil* marriage, nor refused to be present at it, in the capacity of witnesses. All that they refused to do was, to perform the ceremony of the Catholic Church, a matter in which they were assuredly justified, when the laws and injunctions of that Church were flagrantly disregarded. In all other respects they recognised the marriage.

Another form of this unfairness is manifest in the treatment that Belgium has met with from the same parties. Protestant Holland, Protestant Prussia, the Protestant States of Switzerland and of Germany generally, will be quoted, for industry, enterprise, prosperity, &c.; but Belgium, teeming with the fruits of industry and successful enterprise, prosperous and peaceful as she is, finds little favour with English publicists, because of her inveterate *Popery*!

In fact she has disappointed them! For the first three or four years of her separation from Protestant Holland, there were the rifest rumours

of her distress ; and the most confident prophecies that she would certainly break down and become bankrupt. Instead of doing so, she has most provokingly insisted, not only on maintaining her condition, but had the further audacity of very much improving it.

The unhappy Catholic Cantons of Switzerland have been denied all sympathy in their most cruel persecutions, because of their being *Catholic*. The assassination of Priests and of lay Catholics of note, the plunder of religious houses, the expulsion, penniless and pitilessly, of Bishops, and of the members of religious orders, including those of females as well as of men, the wholesale plunder of the Catholic laity, and plunder not of mere money alone, nor of mere money and goods ; but also of rights and franchises, civil and religious,—in short, the *red republicanism* that is rampant in the unhappy Helvetic Confederacy ;—upon all this there is either a total silence, among the writers of England, or else there is extenuation and apology for the oppressors, because *nominally* Protestant ; and misrepresentation and censure for the oppressed, because they have the bad luck of being *Papists*.

Toleration and religious liberty, as understood and advocated by too many English writers, mean the abrogation of every religious principle and practice among Catholics that is at all displeasing or inconvenient to the licentious and atheistical liberals of the Continent; especially of Germany *much be-mused in beer!*

The Committee of the Association increased enormously in number during the stirring spring and summer of 1843. As I have before explained, that Committee resembled in its duties and office the "Council" of English public bodies, such as the "National Political Union," when that body flourished in Birmingham, the Chartist Association, the Anti-Corn-Law League, &c. &c. A very large number of young Barristers in particular joined us at this juncture, and between them and the accession of several country gentlemen, our numbers in the General Committee ran up to between two and three hundred. Of these the average attendance might be set down as about forty; but occasions were continually occurring when the whole, or nearly the whole number on the list, attended in the committee-room.

As the number of highly intelligent and ener-

getic young patriots increased in our *up-stairs* assemblies, it was found necessary to cut out work for them; and an expedient was hit upon that amply served this end, while also generally useful to the agitation. From its earliest day, the Committee of the Association was in the practice of presenting reports from time to time, upon subjects of immediate interest connected with the cause; but our numbers being comparatively few, the labour had been heavy, and the reports only occasional. Now, however, when we had such extensive reinforcements, and when the plethoric state of our exchequer justified the expenses of printing, publishing, &c. to a large amount each month, we set about the work in earnest.

I give a list of the various Reports, &c. published from time to time by the Repeal Association, to show that we were ready and able to give reason for the faith that was in us; and that our demand for Repeal was not a mere unreasoning cry, but the expression of a well-considered and well-founded demand and desire.

Reports of the Loyal National Repeal Association.

FIRST SERIES.	PREPARED BY	DATE.
Report on the number of Representatives to which Ireland is en- titled	D. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	Apr. 21, 1840.
Report. — Ecclesiastical Revenues.	Ditto.	Apr. 23, 1840.
Report. — State of the Franchise in Ireland .	Ditto.	Apr. 27, 1840.
Report. — Means by which the Union was carried	Ditto.	Apr. 30, 1840.
Report. — Suggesting a proposal for the recon- struction of the House of Commons of Ire- land	Ditto.	May 4, 1840.
Report. — Financial In- justice inflicted on Ire- land	Michael Staunton, Esq.	May 12, 1840.
Report. — Determination shown by the Irish People to maintain the free Constitution of Ireland. Resolu- tions of Volunteers of 1782	D. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	May, 1840.

SECOND SERIES.

First Report. — Resolu- tions passed at the period of the Union against that measure .	Ditto.	August, 1840.
Second Report on ditto .	Ditto.	August, 1840.

REPORTS.	PREPARED BY	DATE.
Report. — Fisheries of Ireland	D. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	August, 1840.
Report. — Comparative State of Crime in England and Ireland .	W. J. O'Neill Daunt, Esq.	August, 1840.
Report.—Disastrous Ef- fects of the Union on the Woollen, Silk and Cotton Manufactures of Ireland	T. M. Ray, Esq. Secre- tary to the Repeal As- sociation	August, 1840.
Repeal Catechism . . .	D. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	Feb. 1842.
Financial Management of Ireland	Michael Staunton, Esq.	August, 1842.
Report.—Various Reme- dies proposed for the Evils complained of under the existing system of Poor Laws in Ireland	J. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	Jan. 1843.
Argument for Ireland .	Ditto.	Jan. 1843.
Commercial Injustices .	Ditto.	Jan. 1843.
First General Report of the Parliamentary Committee	W. S. O'Brien, Esq. M.P.	March, 1844.
First Report on Borough Franchises	Francis Brady, Esq. . .	Mar. 11, 1844.
Two Reports on Removal of Irish Poor from England	Robert Mullen, Esq. . .	Mar. 25, 1844, and Mar. 1845.
Petition to the House of Commons for Inquiry into the State Trials .	W. S. O'Brien, Esq. M.P.	Feb. 1844.

REPORTS.	PREPARED BY	DATE.
Petition against Franchise Bill	D. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	Apr. 17, 1844.
Report on Fiscal Relations between Great Britain and Ireland .	J. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	Apr. 17, 1844.
Report on the Ordnance Memoir of Ireland .	Thomas Davis, Esq..	Apr. 17, 1844.
Report on the Irish Municipal Amendment Bill	Michael Doheny, Esq.	Apr. 23, 1844.
Report on the County Franchises of Ireland	Francis Brady, Esq..	Ap. 29, 1844.
Report on the Papers relating to Scinde. .	M. J. Barry, Esq.	May 13, 1844.
Report. — Commercial Tariffs and Regulations of the several States of Europe . .	J. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	May 20, 1844.
Report. — Joint - stock Banking in Ireland .	John Reynolds, Esq.	April, 1844.
Report.—Arms (Ireland) Returns	Thomas Davis, Esq..	May 27, 1844.
Report.—Lord Elliott's Registration Bill . .	J. L. Fitzgerald, Esq.	June, 1844.
Report.—Industrial Resources of Ireland . .	T. McNevin, Esq.	August, 1844.
Report.—Glass Duties .	Martin Crean, Esq.	Aug. 1844.
Report. — Petit Juries, county Tipperary . .	J. C. Fitzpatrick, Esq.	Aug. 13, 1844.
Report.—Hurrying Bills through Parliament .	Thomas Davis, Esq.	Aug. 19, 1844.
Report.—Opening Post-Office Letters . . .	Ditto.	Aug 26, 1844.

REPORTS.	PREPARED BY	DATE.
Report.—Attendance of Irish Members . . .	Thomas Davis, Esq. . .	Sept. 2, 1844.
Report.—Irish Fisheries	M. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	Sept. 2, 1844.
Address to the Queen on incarceration of State Prisoners	W.S. O'Brien, Esq. M.P.	June 2, 1844.
Second General Report	Ditto.	Nov. 26, 1844.
Seven Reports on the Estimates of 1844-5 .	Thomas Davis, Esq. . .	July to Nov.
Report on Regulation of the Profession of Physic, &c.	John Gray, Esq. M.D. .	March, 1845.
First Report on Land Question	D. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	Apr. 14, 1845.
Appendix of Evidence to ditto	J. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	Apr. 14, 1845.
Observations on Report of Chamber of Com- merce	Bryan A. Molloy, Esq. .	March, 1845.
Report on a Bill to esta- blish Museums of Art in Corporate Towns .	J. Kelly, Esq. M.P. . .	Apr. 14, 1845.
Report.—Maynooth Col- lege Endowment Bill	D. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	Apr. 14, 1845.
Second and third Re- ports on Land Ques- tion	Ditto.	April & May.
Three Reports on Repeal Reading-room	T. M. Ray, Esq. . . .	April, 1845.
Report on Service of Process Bill for Eng- land and Scotland . .	James O'Dowd, Esq. .	May, 1845.
Report on issue of Bank- notes in Ireland . . .	J. Reynolds, Esq. T.C.	June 3, 1845.

REPORTS.	PREPARED BY	DATE.
Three Reports on the Budget of 1845 . . .	J. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	March, 1845.
Report on Poor-Law Amendment Bill . . .	R. Mullen, Esq. . . .	June 10, 1845.
Two Reports on Bill to promote letting of Field-Gardens . . .	W. Mackey, Esq. . . .	June 30, 1845.
Report.—Tenants' Com- pensation Bill . . .	Thomas Davis, Esq. . .	May 23, 1845.
Repeal Dictionary . . .	J. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	July, 1845.
Report.—Charitable Do- nations and Bequest (Ireland)	B. A. Molloy, Esq. . . .	July 21, 1845.
Report.—Circuit Regu- lations (England) Com- mission	J. L. Fitzgerald, Esq. .	July, 1845.
Report.—Progress of Le- gislation for Ireland— Session 1845	B. A. Molloy, Esq. . . .	Sept. 1845.
Report.—Valuation of Ireland Bill	M. Doheny, Esq. . . .	July, 1845.
Report.—General Grand Jury Laws of Ireland .	J. L. Fitzgerald, Esq. .	Dec. 1, 1845.
Report.—Inquiries for Irish Railway Legisla- tion to be transacted in Dublin	Sir C. O'Loughlen, Bart.	Dec. 22, 1845.
Report.—Lunatic Asy- lums	Charles Bianconi	Feb. 2, 1846.
Third General Report .	W.S. O'Brien, Esq. M.P.	Feb. 16, 1846.
Second Edition, "Argu- ment for Ireland" . .	J. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	June 20, 1846.

Subsequent to the unhappy schism and rupture in the Repeal Association, additional reports were drawn up, in anticipation of a discussion in Parliament of the great question of Repeal. Mr. O'Connell had announced in the autumn of 1846, his intention to bring the question forward the next session—an intention frustrated by what circumstances it is unnecessary to say.

To prepare the public mind for this, the “Repeal Discussion” Sub-committee then presented the following Reports, viz.—

Two on the Fiscal and Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland.

One on the State of Trade and Commerce in Ireland, epitomized from former documents, by T. M. Ray, the Secretary.

One upon the Evils of Absenteeism, and on the Deportation of Irish Paupers from England and Scotland; contrasting the inhuman readiness manifested in various parts of those countries to throw back on Ireland, at the risk of life, the worn-out Irish artisans and labourers, who had spent their best days and the greater part of their lives in adding to the wealth of Great Britain; with the utter refusal of Parliament, and of successive

ministries, to sanction or propose any legislative measure that might tend to check the disastrous drain of absentee rent, which robs Ireland of so much of her capital.

A report on Land-tenure, and the various projects started by various parties for the amelioration of the relations between landlord and tenant.

Two or three reports on projects for the Employment of the People during the potato dearth, and its concurrent and consequent disasters, by the undertaking of an extensive system of waste-land reclamation, &c.

Three or four reports, showing that the Catholic Emancipation Act had been practically repealed in so far as regarded not only the appointment to the multitudinous minor offices in the executive; but in the far more grievous respect of the jury panels in counties, and jury lists in political trials.

The minor Committees and Sub-committees, in which these reports were prepared and drawn up, were orderly enough and generally unanimous in their deliberations and decisions. But this was by no means the case with the "General and

Finance Committee," the chief or managing Committee of the whole.

My father's experience in Agitation proved to him that there should be the following incidents to any and all forms of popular organization :—

1st. That all deliberations and proceedings should be *open*.

He never permitted a secret or an exclusive Committee to be formed, or to sit. Entire publicity and above-board operations were always insisted on by him.

2d. A regular record of proceedings : such record to be also open to examination, whenever required.

3dly. Facility to any member of the general body to get himself upon any Committee. It only required that the individual so desiring admission should be proposed and seconded ; and he was almost certain of being instantly appointed.

4thly. The proceedings of Committees to be at all times subject to revision, or to appeal from them in the open Association itself ; and none of its acts, *if questioned*, to be considered valid, unless sanctioned and adopted in the open Association.

This was a necessity of the state of the law in

Ireland respecting public assemblies ; which forbid not only all manner of delegation *to*, but also all delegation *from*, such assemblies.

The General Committee had thus to attend to the every-day working of the cause under what must at first sight appear considerable difficulties. It could never play any hidden game ; all its counsels, designs, and acts were at all times open and known to the public ; and even if a resolution of importance by any chance happened not to get wind on the day of its passing, (a very rare occurrence indeed, as we generally found that before evening of the days of our sittings, the major part of what had been done was known all over Dublin,) there it was in black and white, on the Committee minute-books, sure to be seen and made public during the week. And the great number, and facile additions to that number, of members of Committee, and the advantage given to *crotchety* and troublesome men, by the knowledge that, however outvoted up stairs, they could rip up past transactions again, and cause a re-discussion in the Hall, must, *prima facie*, seem calculated to obstruct all rational progress and decision.

But in practice these difficulties were found comparatively trifling. As to numbers, as has been already mentioned, an average attendance of about forty was the rule, even when the total of the names on the Committee list had exceeded 200. And the very knowledge that there was little or no real difficulty in getting upon the Committee actually operated as a check to the desire of being upon it.

The openness and publicity of our counsels and proceedings constituted no new feature in popular agitation. Such had been the invariable practice of the Catholic Association. Mr. O'Connell had set out in political life with the determination to avoid all concealments. He had seen how futile had been the attempts of the Irish revolutionists in 1798 and 1803 to cover themselves with the cloak of secrecy—how treachery had waited upon all their movements, and frustrated every hope. He had noticed the mutual suspicions and frequent betrayals that occurred among their colleagues in the secret councils of those times, when the first ill-success spread panic. And as his was a policy that in itself had no need to shun the day, he resolved to pursue it throughout with entire and

consistent openness; and rather to forego a collateral advantage purchasable by secrecy, than in any way depart from the line he had laid down for himself, and put his fairest hopes for Ireland in the power and at the mercy of traitors, fools, or cowards.

The liability of the Committee's resolves and proceedings to be revised, and if need were, annulled, by the Association in full meeting, proved a difficulty as inconsiderable in practice as that of the liability to inconvenient numbers in the Committee. The appeal to the general meeting was indeed pretty often *threatened*; but most rarely put in execution. Men were satisfied with the impression they made by the threat of appeal, and the minor concessions they extorted by its aid; and partly influenced by the consciousness that they would have but their trouble for their pains, as the majority of the Committee usually included the men of most influence in the Association; and partly actuated by the better motive of desiring to avoid all public squabbling, the dissenting minority, in most cases, submitted and pushed their opposition no further than the door of the Committee-room.

In the records of Agitation there has been but one man noted for carrying the war out of the Committee-room. This gentleman, an active and prominent member of the Catholic Association, was usually to be found in opposition to the plans in favour with the main body of the Committee. Time after time he protracted the discussion of particular matters during three or four days of successive adjournments, before a decision could be had upon them, and "even though vanquished, he could (and did) argue still." Mr. O'Connell upon several occasions put the question to him whether he was satisfied to abide by the decision to which the Committee had come; and even offered to re-open the discussion again, and let him try his chance ^{once more}, rather than that the divisions in Con ^{gress} should be repeated in the general meeting. The individual alluded to generally answered that he gave the matter up; and yet, on the next day of meeting of the Association, he was sure to be found broaching once more the whole subject of the dispute, as if nothing at all respecting it had been agreed upon up stairs!

It would be an endless task to endeavour to

recount the varieties of difficulties and distractions that beset the current of business in the General Committee. The labour of conducting that business was great at all times, but particularly so in our numerous and excited meetings of 1843. The anxieties at that time were excessive, as scarcely a Committee day passed, without some startling novelty being proposed and pressed with most energetic earnestness upon us. We never knew what the day might bring forth, and were compelled to be perpetually upon our guard against surprises.

It was strange and sad to witness the conduct of a few of the younger men who joined us in this year. At an age when a disposition to confidingness and generosity of ~~sensibility~~ ^{sensibility} towards others is most usually remarked, ~~and~~ ^{and} seemed to have entered the Association imbued with feelings of the darkest, and yet the paltriest suspicion of persons who had preceded them in the Agitation. A constant expectation of making out something very wonderful; some terrible offence against the country, and against patriotism—a disposition to resist everything that originated with an elder member of Committee; and almost to impute

motives to that member and to his supporters, and a rather intolerant tone in pressing on us their own peculiar propositions and plans—such were the characteristics of, as I have said, a few among the crowd of active spirits that enrolled themselves this year in the national struggle. Hence many of our difficulties of the time and afterwards, and nearly all our anxieties. For the open opposition and hostility of the Anti-Repealers, English and Irish, was of small account in our eyes, as compared with the dangers of internal dissension and division. With union in the popular body success had been achieved in 1829, in despite of the will of the then Sovereign, and the prejudices and hostility of the Ministry and the two Houses of Parliament. The organization of the Repeal Association was infinitely more extensive and general throughout the country; and if we could only keep united, there was every rational probability of speedy and entire success. But once divided, failure and ruin would be inevitable.

Unhappily those dissensions and divisions, and that entire disunion we with so much reason dreaded and deprecated, were laboured for, and

fostered even from the beginning of 1843; and the propagators of them sedulously pursued their disastrous ends, till they met their full accomplishment in that year of disgrace and dismay, the year 1848.

CHAPTER XI.

MEETING AT MULLAGHMAST. — RATHMORE. — KILCULLEN. — REPEAL
SPEECHES. — THE BANQUET. — GOVERNMENT PROCLAMATION. — MEET-
ING AT CLONTARF FORBIDDEN. — CONCLUSION.

It was late in the autumn of this year, (1843,) that the great meeting was held at Mullaghmast, in the County of Kildare, which formed a very prominent topic with our prosecutors at the subsequent State Trials.

The locality of this meeting was famous, or rather *infamous*, from the circumstance mentioned in the following extract from writers on Irish history :—

“ After the 19th year of Queen Elizabeth, a horrible massacre was committed by the English at the Rathmore of Mulloghmaston, on some hundreds of the most peaceable of the Irish gentry, invited thither on the public faith and under the protection of Government.”

The "Rathmore" mentioned in the foregoing, is one of those singular constructions common in Ireland, generally designated by the people, "Danish forts." They are too well-known to the general reader from the many interesting works upon the antiquities of these islands, to need any detailed description here. The Rath at Mullaghmast is, like nearly all the others, a circular enclosure on the top of an eminence, with a descent from all sides of it close to the fort itself. The walls are artificial mounds, rising to about twice the height of a man, and clothed centuries ago with the ordinary vegetation and verdure that soon covers and almost obliterates the traces of man, where he has ceased to dwell or to make resort.

The space enclosed is of the largest, and quite competent to have accommodated the multitude of victims who are recorded to have been upon it. Certainly, no place could be better fitted for a trap for the unwary, the mound being so high all around it, with the exception of one or two narrow openings, which were well guarded, doubtless; while on the top of the mounds, the

slaughterers may be supposed to have taken their stations, at least during the first of the assault. The doomed Janissaries at Constantinople, or the Mamelukes in Alexandria, were scarcely more securely trapped for wholesale slaughter and utter destruction, than the crowds of the ancient nobility and gentry of Ireland within this fatal enclosure, into which they were led and betrayed by their disastrous reliance upon English honour.

We left Dublin on a Saturday afternoon, with the intention of sleeping at Kilcullen, a large village town in Kildare. We were as merry a coachfull of Agitators, packed both inside and out, upon and in a large mail hired for the purpose, as ever yet started on an expedition; and my father, as usual, the liveliest and the merriest of the party. He

“ With many a merry tale, and many a song,
Cheer’d the rough road, and made us wish it long !”

There is a sort of poetic licence in the last quotation. He was guiltless of having, at any period of his life, ever *sung* a song; but was fond of reciting the most touching and patriotic of the

sweet and stirring lays of Tommy Moore; as well as many of the older songs and ballads, having reference to the melancholy history of Ireland. His recitals were beautiful; completely entrancing and carrying away his auditory. I have witnessed even phlegmatic *Saxon* blood aroused by them, and warmed up to expressions of sympathy with the fall of Ireland's fortunes, and horror at the means of English conquest.

We were received at Kilcullen by the good and amiable parish priest, the Rev. Dr. Murtagh; who most hospitably insisted on our taking possession of his domicile in every way. A merry dinner followed, and then to bed early, to be ready for the good work of the morrow. After mass had been heard by the Catholics of the party, and our Protestant colleagues had had the opportunity of attending their own service, we set out for Mullaghmast, attended and preceded by carriages with deputations from the various municipal bodies of Leinster, all in their robes, bands of music of various Temperance Societies, dressed out in their uniforms, unknown at the Horse Guards, gentry and others from Dublin and other

towns, &c. &c. As usual, there was a guerilla *cavalry* of stout, comfortable well-to-do farmers and yeomen, on their own farm-horses; many of them, too, with their comely wives, snugly seated *en croupe*, and the younger men each with a wand and ribbons of sky-blue and white, or green, to mark their office as organizers and *peace-keepers*; while others bore the same insignia on foot, to show they were also ready to act as a voluntary police, and prevent the slightest infraction of the law.

My father, of course, spoke from the centre platform; and, as a matter of course, the horrible incident that has given a melancholy celebrity in Ireland to the great "Rath" of Mullaghmast, was referred to and dilated upon by him. The subsequent speakers made it the chief theme and burden of their orations; some with considerable effect and impression, and others with *effect*, too, but not of a very flattering nature.

I was particularly struck with the speech of one individual. He had arrived in the course of his most fluent harangue at that period of the tale, (already ten times told,) where the Irish

chieftains and their leading dependents were entered into the enclosure they never again were to repass with life; and thus he announced the catastrophe:—

“And while they were expecting to be regaled *with all the delicacies of the season, they had their heads cut off!!*”

This, as to descriptive power and effect, appeared to me quite worthy to be classed with the following, in a description of an exhibition of pictures about fifteen years ago. The subject represented was a murder; and the describer thus wrote:—

“Behind him (*scil.* the victim), stands a ruffian, *evidently animated by no friendly intentions*, about to stab him in the back!”

The presumption in the second limb of the sentence was, to say the least of it, not at all forced or unnatural.

The usual “Banquet” took place within the Rath itself, which admitted of the construction of an immense tent, beneath which, not less certainly than 600 or 700 persons managed to stow themselves. The immense tent was hand-

somely adorned with festoons of laurel and of flowers, and patriotic mottoes and devices; and the brilliancy of the scene increased by three or four rows of well-dressed ladies at either end.

I had the honour of being appointed Chairman on this occasion, and as I took my elevated post, the following intimation was conveyed to me by the stewards:—

“ We must break up at nine for the sake of the Press, and also to make sure that the remainder of the people go off the ground to their homes. It is now six, and you have three hours to get through the dinner and the twenty-two toasts. Do what you can.”

Thus informed and incited, I had to set to, and I have always made it my boast since, that I “got over the ground,” in spite even of the somewhat pertinacious melody of the Temperance bands; and “*did the work*” a quarter of an hour short of the stipulated time. Let me recommend my example to others who may have similar troublesome honours thrust upon them. I spoke very briefly myself, and with the exception of one

or two speakers, I was up to propose the next toast within a minute or a minute and a half, after the last had been duly responded to.

Our descent from the Rath, after the termination of the proceedings, was exceedingly picturesque. The night had fallen darkly, and the voluntary police, or "O'Connell's Police," as they had insisted upon designating themselves, held each a huge torch, its murky and flickering glare throwing a lurid light upon the grassy walls of the moat, and upon the visages and forms of all present. Fancy might almost have imaged us as the shadowy and "blood boltered" forms of the murdered multitude who had there fallen, revisiting the scene of their horrid fate in the dead darkness and stillness of that autumn night.

The next week there were "rumours dire," that a crisis was at hand—that the Government, having hitherto displayed vigour only in empty denunciations and bravadoes in Parliament, had at length screwed their spirits up to actual interference with the popular demonstrations.

On Friday, 6th of October, it was known that an important Privy Council was being held in

Dublin, to receive a despatch from the English Privy Council, having reference to an intended great meeting on the strands of Clontarf near Dublin, announced for Sunday. What result was come to we possessed no possible means of divining, and had to wait in patience or *impatience* for twenty-four hours, ere we learned it. In expectation of a *coup d'état*, my father assembled the Committee early on Saturday, and while waiting intelligence, we occupied ourselves with the huge heap of missives from various parts of the country, and from Liverpool, Glasgow, &c., announcing the *contingents* that were on their way to Dublin to attend the meeting on Sunday. As the day wore on, the Committee-room became densely crowded, and the excitement rapidly increased. At a little after three we were informed that an unexpected channel of intelligence had been opened, and that we might therefore expect to hear whatever was to be heard; and at length, at half-past three a breathless messenger rushed in with a copy of a proclamation, just wet from the press, against any meeting at Clontarf.

What was to be done? The day was closing

fast, and early next morning it was certain that thousands would be on the ground, and multitudes of others in full march towards it, from various directions. How were all these to be warned, and what *could* be done to avert the fearful chances of collision and bloodshed upon the morrow? chances incurred with such startling recklessness by those, whosoever they might be, that had delayed issuing the proclamation.

My father instantly met the case. Instead of wasting time in denunciations, he sent one of his most faithful and trusty followers and adherents, Mr. Peter Martin, a most highly respectable builder, of Dublin, with full powers to cause the platform to be taken down, and removed. Next, there was an appeal for volunteers to offer themselves to go out and notice the country people approaching the city. At once, twenty or thirty gentlemen offered, and were despatched in pairs; while others were charged with the same commission throughout the streets of Dublin. In short, every thing conceivable in the hurry of the moment was done by Mr. O'Connell, and the General Committee, to prevent the spilling of

human blood ; which would have been the inevitable consequence, had the original intention been adhered to, and the people been allowed to proceed unwarned, till they found themselves full in front of the strong body of soldiery that had been privately ordered to the ground.

It came to be known subsequently that the proclamation was received from the English Privy Council, and *adopted* here on Friday, the 6th ; yet its publication was, as I have stated, delayed till so late on Saturday, that the chances were a hundred to one that it could not be made known in sufficient time to prevent the immense assemblage coming together. The present Earl St. Germans, then Lord Eliot, and Secretary for Ireland, actually put forward in the House as a reason for this delay, which might have cost thousands of lives, that “time was wanted to *arrange the wording* of the proclamation!!!”

I must mention here, that a rumour of a very fearful character prevailed as to the *real* cause of the delay ;—a rumour officially sneered at, indeed, but never contradicted, or, at least, satisfactorily contradicted. It was, that in the Irish Privy Coun-

cil a disposition was manifested to urge the total suppression of the proclamation, or, at least, its delay until Sunday morning, so as the people might assemble, and not be made aware till they reached the ground that the meeting was forbidden. The soldiery were then to advance, the proclamation and the riot act were to be read, and the sequel—left to chance!

Rumour added, that, but for the energetic and most honourable, while most natural and humane remonstrances of the Irish Commander-in-Chief, the gallant and good Sir Edward Blakeney, this most monstrous and devilish proposition had some chance of being adopted.

If these statements can be proved to have been unfounded,—and for the honour of our common humanity it is most desirable that they should be so proved,—it deeply imports the character and conscience of every man who had a seat at that Council Board on those eventful days,—saving always and excepting the good Sir Edward Blakeney,—to have an official refutation of them published even now.

My limits here warn me to conclude, at least for the present, these hasty memoranda. I have endeavoured to jot down things exactly as I recollected them, and to deal fairly and truthfully with every incident and person I have noticed. There has not, at any rate, been any wilful desire to give offence, or to misrepresent; and all that I have dealt with must be allowed to be fair matter of public comment.

THE END.

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